

Growing Chik®

2 Years
5 Months

Good Manners: Are They Important?

Good manners are not necessarily "formal manners"—or even "company manners". It is true that good manners consist in part of the simple courtesies—saying please, thank you, excuse me. These pleasant words help to make our increasingly impersonal world a little more personal, a little more gentle.

However, the key to good manners is our attitude. It is not rigid conformance to social convention. It is a respect for the rights, ideas and feelings of others, even those with whom we disagree.

When you look at good manners from this point of view the importance of certain social conventions becomes a little clearer. A few are essential; a few are trivial; most lie somewhere in between depending on circumstances and your own family custom. But whatever courtesies you decide are important, it is the qualities of caring and consideration expressed through the courtesies which are the essentials to be taught to children. "Thank you" can express pleasure and appreciation. It can also be said in such a way as to offend or even hurt.

A child's manners will not only reflect his attitudes toward others, they will also help him develop desirable attitudes. The young child who is trained to say "please" and "thank you" may not, at age three, be any more considerate than a child who has not been taught these courtesies. But as his good manners bring him praise and smiles, he becomes pleased with himself. This in turn makes him feel more friendly toward others. Through the practice of good

manners he begins to develop the attitudes which courtesy should reflect.

These attitudes and the learned courtesies are further reinforced as the child sees them practiced by his parents. He accepts his parents' valuation of others as being individuals worthy of consideration and he adopts the outward forms which are the reflection of this attitude.

Thus the child learns to express appreciation in ways which are pleasurable to others, to make his desires known considerately. He learns good manners in much the same way that he learns to share and to take turns. These, too, are ways of expressing the same attitudes of care and consideration.



Content, Process and Play

Everything Youngster learns (and everything we learn, also) can be divided into two main parts:

1. Content. Children are always learning a number of specific facts or specific skills. They learn the specific fact that it gets dark after the sun goes down, and they learn the specific fact that a ball bounces when you drop it. They learn the specific skill of stacking one block on top of another, and



they learn the specific skill of making marks on surfaces like walls (which makes you wish they wouldn't learn certain things!) All these learnings of facts and skills are called content because they are seen as an assortment of facts and skills which make up a large part of the child's "learning bag." And this learning bag contains a number of specific learnings of certain facts and skills.

2. Process. Youngster is learning more than specific facts and skills, however. He is also learning about procedures or processes. This kind of learning is much more advanced and we urge you to help your Youngster develop his "process learning." What is "process learning"? Stated simply, this is learning to use general principles to solve practical problems. Before we get down to specific ways of developing this extremely important ability, let us give you a concrete example of "process learning".



Learning About Process

Let's say that your Youngster has learned the specific skill of stacking large blocks on top of each other. One day he notices that you have put the cookie jar in a kitchen cabinet which is high above where he can reach. He now wants a cookie, but the cookies are high up there and he cannot reach them. But he has learned about stacking blocks, and now his learning of a general principle comes into play. He moves a chair next to the kitchen counter, climbs onto the chair, then onto the counter, opens the cabinet door, reaches into the cookie jar and takes out a cookie. It is precisely at this

point that your Youngster has demonstrated that he is learning processes. He learned the specific skill of stacking blocks, and he also learned a process or a general principle. The principle he learned was this: You can put things on top of other things, and the things on top are higher up. Does it sound real simple? It is, but he also saw a general principle: If you want to reach high-up things you can get on top of something else. And so he reached the cookie jar. What he learned from stacking blocks was a general principle which he used to solve a practical problem, which was: "How do I get to those cookies?" From stacking blocks he learned a process or a general principle. It is this kind of learning which we want to help your Youngster expand.

How do you expand process learning? There are two basic ways of going about it:

1. You help him "fill in the gaps".
2. You help him "go beyond what he has already learned".

Here's how you do it:

Filling in the Gaps

Here's an example of "filling in the gaps". You build an incomplete stairway, preferably against the side of a box. The first step will have one block, the second has two. Then leave a gap one block wide, followed by a step containing four blocks. Ask Youngster if he can pile up blocks to make the missing step. To do this he must see that his step is higher than the second step but lower than the fourth one. At first he may fail to make his step high enough or, more likely, will not be able to stop himself and will make the step too high. Then you can show him how the steps must all be even so that it is easy for a doll to walk up them.

It may take a few days and several repeat sessions before he can build the step accurately the first time. At such time, he has the right idea of what is to be done. But there is no assurance that he can transfer the idea to

a new situation. To create a generalized (broadly applicable) understanding, it is necessary to make small, systematic changes in the task. A small first change would be to make the second step vacant instead of the third. After this is mastered, a new set of materials will be in order. Drinking glasses could be filled to different levels, with one "step" missing. Let Youngster choose between two candidates: A correct glass and one that is filled too much or too little. Here the answer can only be chosen rather than manipulated up and down like the blocks, so it is more abstract. But the blocks have provided the needed concrete first learning experience. Next, pencils or straws of different lengths might be used, with their common base being first at the bottom, then at the top. Examples still farther afield are buttons or cardboard discs of different sizes, with their centers on the same line; paper squares that have been fractionally colored (color from top to bottom but only part of the width); and paper circles with two, four, eight and sixteen dots on them. These differences in number are large enough to be seen without having to count.

Going Beyond What Youngster Has Already Learned

These same materials can be used for going beyond what he has already learned. You can ask Youngster to find the next part of a series (you build the first three steps, and ask him to build what comes next). You can help his language grow with activities such as this. "Should the next one be bigger or smaller?" Again, blocks are a good way to start, and the stairway is an excellent way to begin. Much later you can build steps that increase by two blocks at a time. This will help him develop an awareness of number, because now he must deal with relative quantity rather than just getting the next step a little higher than the one before.

In these and many other simi-

lar ways you can help your Youngster "stretch his mind". And you are very definitely getting him ready for school.



A Sense of Order

If we mean to teach Youngster a sense of order in his life, (we've talked about this before), here are a few reminders for mother and dad:

(1) Provide for the order of toys and possessions. Make boxes and shelves available for playthings to be sorted and separated. Just as you organize your cupboards and closets, so Youngster's tools should be orderly and not junked together randomly.

(2) Provide for the order of space, particularly if you have more than one child and limited area. Decide what goes where—doll corner here, clay play there, etc. You will find fewer conflicts when the territory is divided in advance. After all you have a place for cooking, another for watching television, etc.

(3) Provide for the order of time. This will help Youngster become sensitive to time order where he can learn to anticipate events, to plan them and learn to postpone what he is currently involved in and do it later. How do you teach this by providing order of time? Plan that your meals are at the same time regularly; that the family eats together and meals are pleasurable; bedtime is consistent as is the sequence leading up to it—the bedtime story helps him to anticipate a happy experience. Such well-established habits will make Youngster's day predictable and secure.

We know that many families cannot arrange their affairs in such a way, however, that everything is always in its proper place or that everything always happens on schedule. What we are describing is the ideal. If you cannot come up with this ideal in your own family, we

still suggest that you try very hard to work toward it. The general rule is this: Try to get things in their proper place, and try to work out a schedule where events in your family's day occur with dependable regularity. This general rule, if you try to follow it, will help your child later as he comes to grips with school learning tasks.



Courage — Now and Later

In a quiet moment have you ever wondered what the future holds for your child? You know some of the problems and heartaches life can bring. Will your son — your daughter — meet whatever life brings with courage, sensitivity and tenderness? How can you help your "Half-past Two" develop the inner toughness—and tenderness—which he will need?

You have already made a start in this direction. When you recognized your Toddler's drive to learn about his world and made it possible for him to explore it safely you were helping him to develop self-confidence and courage.

Quiet watching of the exploring child has provided protection while allowing him to develop independence and the ability to meet and conquer small obstacles. As a child successfully overcomes small obstacles, he develops the confidence to solve larger problems.

You have wisely avoided the all-too-common mistakes made by some parents. The first of these is the half-hearted, monotonously repeated warnings issued by the parent whose attention is elsewhere. These warnings are usually non-specific: "Karen, don't do that." These half-hearted, non-specific warnings are meaningless to the absorbed child. Don't do what? Since Karen isn't certain what she shouldn't be doing, she continues to pursue her interest of the moment. Finally, and often too late, comes "Karen, I said stop

that!" But stop what? By this time perhaps, Karen, chair and all have toppled with a crash, a wail, a certain amount of parental fear—maybe anger, possibly a smack or a shake. Karen is left resentful and confused. There is little consistency or security in her world. She is sadder, but no wiser. She may be a little more afraid of rocking chairs and of her parent, but she hasn't learned much.

On the other hand some parents over-dramatize, over-protect, over-explain. Every possible hazard is pointed out in gory detail, every act is cautioned against. Grass is full of rusty nails lying in wait for bare feet. Dogs are noisy, rough, dirty, and are apt to bite. Doors and drawers are traps for fingers. Rain means thunder and lightning—or might turn into a tornado. Johnny is cautioned, "Don't climb that. You might fall." "Let me carry the glass. You might break it and cut yourself!" "Don't get wet—you'll surely catch cold and get sick." Don't—be careful—watch out—Johnny is soon so full of horror stories, so overloaded with words, so smothered in protection that he becomes a passive onlooker in life—afraid to commit himself to any new experience.

But, wise as you have been, your child may suddenly display unexplainable fears. One cannot expect a child to overcome fear just because we tell him there is nothing to be afraid of. Fear of water is a case in point. Nothing is more certain to produce lasting fear of water than a parent's determination that his child—or her child—will overcome that fear—immediately. Such a fear is not a shameful thing to be forced out and conquered. Water the child knows—but it is the limited amounts found in bathtubs or puddles. This new, large, and to him, seemingly endless amount of water is different. He wants to approach it gradually, to explore it on his own terms and

in his own good time.

Thus, no matter how confident an explorer your child has become, he may be hesitant and wary when he finds himself in a new and strange situation. An unknown relative who snatches him up for an energetic hug may reduce the Half-past Two to tears and struggling. A large, noisy although friendly dog may panic a child whose previous experience has only included a quiet small dog.



Such fears, though they may seem trivial to an adult, are entirely sensible from the child's point of view.

If we are to help a child be brave we must begin by respecting his worries and fears. Accept his fears for what they are—questions. "Will this hurt? What is this? What should I do?" Talk to him calmly. Don't pressure him to hug Aunt Mary or pet the nice doggie. Give him a chance to recover his balance. Then over a period of time give him frequent opportunities to learn more about the feared object or situation. Work gently but persistently to help him conquer any fear which may hobble his independence.



Vocabulary and Space

We have said in many ways that it is very important for Youngster to learn about space and time. In learning about space he must learn where objects are located "out there". Something is "there", and some-

thing else is in "another place." The difference between "there" and "another place" is actually a difference between where two objects are in space. This is a simple fact of life, but a very important one. Your youngster must learn how to organize space—he is not born with this ability. What he really needs to learn is this: He must learn how to see the patterns among objects in space.

Some of his early learnings about space take place in very ordinary ways. He sees a favorite toy across the room, and he walks to it and picks it up. In moving to the toy, he moves to the place in space where the toy is located. In stooping over to pick up the toy he learns about "down" and "up", and this is more learning about space. And so his space learning develops.

He has also acquired a modest vocabulary of space words to match the experiences: "Up there", "in here", "down there", "no down there". In response to a question, "Does it fit?", he confidently answers, "Yep, it fit." Through his play he discovers more about the physical world. He perceives similarities and differences between things in terms of color, weight, size, shape, odor and taste. Yes, taste! Taste is still an avenue for exploring the unfamiliar although much less frequently than last year.

Next, he uses sorting to help him classify things into a system—size, number, color, etc. Just watch as he builds with blocks, kitchen equipment or construction materials. He orders and controls them. What emerges is what he has constructed; from his own head he has built what he thinks things should be like. He is learning to use reason.

Here are some language and speech games to teach thought, speech and movement through space and time:

(1) Material: Large cardboard carton or barrel with one side

removed. Purpose: To reinforce the use and understanding of space vocabulary: "in", "out", "under", "on top of", "next to". Procedures: One or more adults sit in a circle with Youngster. To introduce the game, you stand yourself inside the box and ask, "Where's Mommy (or Daddy)?" The second adult joins you in responding, "In the box." Youngster will then want his turn in the box. Go through the variations, "Under the box", "on top of", etc. It should provide some laughs, too. The next time you play the game, Youngster may want to go first. With practice he will use the vocabulary with expertise, recognizing also that a "where" question receives an answer describing location.

(2) Bead stringing. Materials: A pair of leather shoelaces and assorted colored wood beads, or make your own — spools which have been colored with different felt-tipped pens. Purpose: To teach color recognition and association; to learn more about sorting and ordering, arranging objects by color and size. Procedures: (a) First allow Youngster to experiment with lace and beads. He'll catch on rapidly. (b) Play "my turn—your turn". You put a bead on your string and invite Youngster to imitate, using his string and bead supply. Each time you add a bead, describe it: "A big red bead" or "a little yellow bead". (c) Allow Youngster to play teacher with you following his procedure. However, do not expect or demand a verbal direction from him. If he provides one, fine. Otherwise, continue with your monologue, "a big red bead", or "a little yellow bead".

(3) Home-made Picture Books. Materials: You can construct one with personal photographs, pictures from magazines or sketches you make yourself. Purposes: To teach logic and order and to help Youngster see how words and pictures



represent the objects, events and ideas that they stand for. Procedure: Choose a familiar episode in Youngster's life. Take bedtime as an example. You would want a sequence of pictures of the following: Bathing, putting on pajamas, brushing teeth, listening to a good-night story, extinguishing of lights.

There are many ways to "read" the book: Youngster can talk about what he sees or you can ask open-ended questions: "What is happening in this picture?" "What do you think will happen next?" It is important that you emphasize the order of the story. Youngster will want more stories like this once he grasps the concept.

In these three games Youngster has had an opportunity to learn more about the world by acting upon it. As a result of these actions he can identify the distinctive features of objects which in turn he uses to sort, categorize and recognize by name. When he is presented with a pictorial representation of his actions, he comes to realize that a picture is a symbol for the act it depicts.



Let Me Tell You About My Grandfather

My grandfather was a most remarkable man, and I want to tell you about him. The reason I write about him in *Growing Child* will be clearer toward the end, but first you must meet him.

I remember Grandfather as a very large man, but I'm sure my childhood perspectives are a little distorted. Actually he was

slightly above average height and weight but, of course to me, he was bigger than life itself.

His usual dress was blue denim overalls and a blue denim work shirt, but he always had an air of dignity about him, the genuine dignity of a man who knows who he is and where he is and what he's doing. It was that rare sort of dignity which a man can feel only when he is in true harmony with his own particular world.

Even with all this dignity, however, Grandfather wasn't grim or austere or unfeeling. Quite the contrary. He was a man who could laugh and joke about those very things which children would see as funny and would appreciate as something which brought them within the magic circle of his notice. To all his grandchildren he was a wondrous ego-builder and I sometimes wonder where today's children find people like this. And, for some strange reason, he called all his grandchildren "Jack", even the females among us.

Although my grandfather is dead these many years, he still looms large as life itself for me, and he had a strong influence on my own development (and development is what *Growing Child* is all about).

He lived most of his life on his quarter-section farm in North-Central Mississippi. It was a red-clay hill farm, but it was his own land and I think the fact that it belonged to him gave him both strength and courage. If you want to know more about this country you must read William Faulkner's books for my grandfather's farm was in the same general area as Faulkner's fabled Yoknapatafha County. (In fact, my grandfather's farm lay in Yalabusha County, Mississippi, which is in the general area where the Yocona and the Tallahatchie rivers flow).

Now in those days, life on a farm like this very quickly got down to the basic essentials. Always there was work to do,

and every member of the household was needed to get all the work done. There were 10 children in my grandfather's family and most of them were still living at home when I knew him best. All the children had definite responsibilities, and every child accepted his responsibilities as a matter of course. After all, each could plainly see that his contribution was needed if the family was to survive from day-to-day.

The men and boys in the family did the things which males did in that day and age (and I hope I don't sound like a male chauvinist at this point). The women and girls likewise did the tasks which seemed to fall to women in those days. While this particular division of work may enrage the women's libbers among our readers, let me say rather simply that I am only trying to report on things as they were then.

So the men did rather manly things and the women did womanly things. Given the times and the circumstances, it seemed a rather satisfactory arrangement.

I spent many long summer days on this farm and I recall them now as some of the best days of my life. Those days were part of my early childhood, and looking back I realize how they helped my own growing up. I wish every kid could have the kind of experiences I shared as part of my grandfather's family. As a duly qualified professional in the field of learning disabilities I'm convinced that the routine day-to-day life of that small farm represents the very best development for the early childhood years. Someone will make a fortune some day by setting up a fairly primitive farm and just letting young kids live and learn there.

Back to my story...what I remember most about my grandfather is that he always made me feel important as a person. He had a firm grasp on this principle long before there was a

science of psychology to define and spell out this particular idea. He did this miracle in very ordinary ways as part of the ordinary everyday world which he shared with all members of his family. And that's what I remember most about my grandfather—he was always sharing his world with his children, his grandchildren, and yes, I've even seen him sharing his same priceless world with his great-grandchildren.



Let me give you just one small example of this. I remember one day when he was planting potatoes. For him this was just another chore to be done around the farm. But on this particular occasion he took me with him. He talked with me about potatoes and how they should be planted. He showed me a seed potato, the "eyes" of that potato, and how he would cut each seed potato into sections so that each section had its proper portion of "eyes".

So, I learned that day about potatoes. I learned also about seed and green, growing things. Most of all I learned a little more about life and the world and how things happen.

I learned more than potatoes that day. I learned that I was an important person—a person so important that the great man himself, my grandfather, if you please, the glorious patriarch, thought I was important enough to learn about potatoes. Now this is real learning. I cannot begin to tell you how important this was for me. I learned that I mattered in the whole mysteri-

ous scheme of things, that I was important, and that what I thought and did was a matter of some consequence. All these truly magnificent learnings my grandfather somehow managed to communicate to me in the simple task of planting potatoes.

In today's gadget-filled world we no longer plant potatoes with our children or even our grandchildren. But I think it is extremely important that we pass on to our children a feel for the fundamental pulses of life itself. It is harder today, but it is truly worth the effort.



"The Hidden Hinge"

The following suggestions are from "The Hidden Hinge", by Rosa Covington Packard, Ballantine Books, New York, 1973: We think they're excellent.

1. Be objective, not personal in your instructions: "Books go in this bookcase." rather than "I want you to be sure to keep your books in the bookcase."

2. Be positive, not negative: "Use the tricycle, it is your size." rather than: "You are too little to ride the bicycle."

3. Give the social reason for rules rather than flat authority: "Hang the coat up before the baby steps on it and wrinkles it." rather than: "Hang it up."

4. Give a solution to a problem rather than mere prohibitions: "Please move to this side of the table, John, so that Mary will be able to see." rather than: "Don't stand in Mary's way, John."

5. Be specific. Give concrete information using concrete names and commands: "If you hold the card by its edge, it will stay clean." rather than: "Don't mess up the cards."

6. Match objects and actions to your words: "Trays (pause and show) are held in the middle (pause and show) near your waist (pause and show)." rather than: "Do it this way."

7. Give awareness of consequences: "Hitting hurts Peter." rather than: "Don't hit Peter."

8. Act as an individual to defend the common law in specific instances: "I will not let you hurt John with the stick." rather than: "We don't hurt people."

9. Recognize the validity of emotions when you limit destructive actions: "I know you are angry but you may not hurt Mary." rather than: "Why did you hit Mary, she is your friend." "I know that you are afraid but you must have the scratch cleaned." rather than: "You are a big girl and that little scratch doesn't hurt." "I know you don't want to wear shoes but you must protect your feet when you walk on city sidewalks." rather than: "You don't want your feet to get all dirty and hurt, do you?"

10. Use simple and scrupulously courteous manners to children and other adults: "Good morning, John, I am glad to see you (hand offered and withdrawn if not taken)." rather than: "Can you say 'good morning' to me, John, and shake my hand?" "Thank you, Aunt Jane, for remembering Susan's birthday." rather than: "What do you say to Aunt Jane, Susan?"



Dear Growing Child

"I greatly enjoy your monthly newsletter and look forward to the next one each month with pleasure. You are doing a helpful and great service to new mothers who want to give the best to their children."

*Mrs. J.N.
Tampa, FL 33615*

"Just a quick note to tell you I appreciate your quality magazine. Our daughter was 3 mo. premature and your information has been a definite help... keep up the good work & may God bless you. Raising children correctly is the most important responsibility we have!"

*Mrs. M.R.
Hansford, CA 91001*



Next Month

- Unpredictable Is the Word for Two-and-a-Half!
- Kinds of Child Raising
- Language & Music

Growing Child

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Growing Child®

2 Years
6 Months

Unpredictable Is the Word For Two-and-a-Half!

Most people who study and work with young children agree with parents that the period around age 2½ is the most exasperating age in the pre-school period. You are no doubt finding it also one of the funniest! Just keep your sense of humor well shined-up, draw on your hidden reserves of patience and objectivity—and both you and your child will weather this stormy period successfully.

Two-and-a-half has a well-earned reputation for going to extremes—sometimes shifting without warning from one extreme to the other. Contrary as this may seem to parents, Two-and-a-half has his own reasons for being so changeable. This is a transitional age. Youngster is just discovering opposites and alternate choices of action. His command of yes and no, come and go, run and stop, give and take, grasp and release, push and pull, attack and retreat is still so evenly balanced that he is as yet unable to decide which way to go. He is too inexperienced to make a reasonable choice and stick to it. He can only learn by doing—so he tends to try out all choices. Sometimes he tries to go both ways at the same time. Life and his surroundings are so complex and so jammed with a bewildering number of choices that Two-and-a-half is almost forced to try both ways, to experience both alternatives, in order to find out which is the right one.

His capacity for voluntary choice is weak. Given a choice between two alternatives, Two-and-a-half is apt to insist on both—or neither! This is not stubbornness. He just cannot yet balance the relative advan-



tage of the two choices or even think of just one to the exclusion of the other!

This same quality of all-or-none characterizes his physical abilities. Two-and-a-half doesn't yet have good control of opposite sets of muscles. He tends to grasp too strongly, squeeze too tightly, let go too suddenly. When being very cautious, as in building a tower of blocks, he may place the block carefully, then release it by spreading his fingers very wide. He enjoys building—and knocking down!

Two-and-a-half has not learned to let go, to relax easily to go to sleep. He may demand a long and complicated bedtime ritual in order to "unwind" for sleep. Once in bed he may talk to himself for some time before falling asleep.

This same difficulty is exhibited in toileting. Two-and-a-half cannot easily relax his bladder sphincter voluntarily—then withholds too long. A child who has been dry during the day since age two may begin to have accidents. He plays so intently that he ignores the mounting bladder pressure until it is too late.

Characteristically, Two-and-a-half cannot modulate his behavior. He is going through the growing pains of learning about opposites and the developmental

method of learning is to try both. He is a sort of pre-school edition of a confused adolescent. Yet by this very process, Two-and-a-half is finding his way. He is learning to choose one by trying two.

After all, Mommy may try on a number of dresses before choosing the one that feels right. Our lives are a series of choices—some simple, some complex. Youngster is taking his first tentative steps toward meeting life's challenges. He must do this first by learning to choose between opposites—and to choose he must first try both.

These characteristic behaviors are not equally marked in all children. They are particularly pronounced in very active children, much less conspicuous among more placid children. However, it is relatively normal to show to some degree swings between these extremes:

From intense activity to passive quiet, sometimes with thumb sucking.

From boisterousness to shyness.

From a keen desire to possess an object to sudden indifference once he has achieved possession.

From loud demands for food to rejection of the food when offered.

From loud laughter, shrieks and screams to whispering or talking in a low monotone.

From loud demands of "me do it!" to dawdling.

These extremes of behavior are not mood swings. They are fluctuations due to Youngster's narrow base of experience. He must try both extremes to find out which one works best at any given moment. Only by trying out the extremes will he eventually find a "middle way".

"Management" works for better relationships than discipline during this period. Forcing him into a given course of behavior is apt to bring on a temper tantrum. With a little guile and some understanding of his present confusions, he can be led to want to do what you desire.

So, love him, enjoy his unpredictability and help him learn during this complex period.



Language & Music

It shouldn't be necessary to structure every moment of Youngster's play. However, in bad weather, cold climates or periods of illness, children are indoors a lot and they sometimes need help with ideas for constructive play. The two-to-three year old loves to listen to music, particularly phonograph records. His preference is for music with a strong and definite beat, and he will respond to it with total body movement. It is not unusual for him to insist upon hearing the same music or stories-to-music over and over again. If you happen to play the piano, guitar or autoharp, you will become his favorite entertainer. Incidentally the autoharp is a splendid and inexpensive instrument. Its special value is that anyone can play it—a knowledge of musical notation is unnecessary. Youngster may not sing along quite yet, but his readiness skills are being sharpened. He is internalizing what he hears.

Here are some songs you can use:

I. Improvised songs—songs you "make up" to fit a situation or a need. Tunes are borrowed from other songs or made up.

(1) Washing Tune: Mulberry Bush—This is how we wash our face, wash our face, wash our face;
This is how we wash our face, Before we eat our dinner.

(2) Bedtime Tune: Hey, Betty Martin—Hey, little sleepy,

sleepy, sleepy; Hey, little sleepy, It's sleep time now.

II. Counting Songs

Tune: This Old Man

This old man, he played one,
He played knick-knack on his thumb,
Knick-knack paddy whack, give your dog a bone,
This old man came rolling home.

This old man, he played two,
he played knick-knack on his shoe, etc.

This old man, he played three,
he played knick-knack on his knee, etc.

This old man, he played four,
he played knick-knack on the floor, etc.

This old man, he played five,
he played knick-knack on his hive, etc.

III. Chants (to be clapped, beat out or played with home-made instrument).

Teddy Bear—originally a rope-jumping chant:

Teddy bear, teddy bear, Turn all around,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, Touch the ground.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, Show your shoe,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, better skiddoo!

Youngster also likes to make music, particularly with home-made musical instruments. Some examples:

1. Cymbal—two flat pot lids.

2. Razzle dazzle—dried peas or macaroni placed in a flour shaker.

3. Tympany—wooden spoons for striking metal pie tins and containers from canned goods.

4. Fife—paper towel cylinder into which you have punched 5 small holes in a row down the top of the cylinder. Next cover one end with wax paper which has been securely taped with cellophane. Now when Youngster vocalizes into the tube, the sound will be amplified. Should he cover some of the holes on the cylinder with his fingers, he will discover that he can produce different tones.

5. Maracas—salt box into which you place a handful of rice or small stones and tape closed. The maracas can be thumped or shaken.

6. Drums—an empty 46 oz. juice can or gallon paint can. Remove both ends. From an old rubber inner tube cut out 2 identical large circles, large enough to cover the ends of the can. Next, punch holes around the edges of the rubber circles. Cover the ends with the rubber circles and lace them tightly to each other with a leather shoelace, lacing through the holes back and forth along the side of the container.

7. Harmonica—a large comb covered with toilet paper which when blown with the mouth slightly open makes a real brassy sound.

8. Guitar—the bottom of a shoe box with 8 to 10 colored rubber bands of varying sizes stretched across it. It can be plucked with finger or teaspoon.

More serious music should be introduced at other times because Youngster is too young to just sit and listen. However, classical music is a magnificent background for fingerpainting, clay play or falling asleep.

Music is more than fun; it is education. Here are the sorts of things Youngster learns:

(1) New vocabulary. Many songs, particularly folk songs and nursery tunes, repeat refrains or words over and over again. For example, "We swing our arms so gayly, gayly; We swing our arms 'so gayly, all on a Saturday night.'" This type of repetition strengthens associations between newly acquired words and their meanings.

(2) Time sense. When swinging the arms, moving the body or tapping an "instrument" to music, the child is exposed to time relations between musical notes. He becomes aware of order—this comes first, this comes next and this comes last. This kind of order is important in both understanding and using speech. It is also extremely important later in learning to read.

What happens to a sentence when we reorder just one word—"Now, I want to go"/"I want to go, now." In addition, changes in the length of utterances and pauses within them, produce different patterns and thus different meanings. Remember a song of the 40's, "Maresy Dotes and Dosey Dotes" ("Mares Eat Oats and Does Eat Oats"), or how about the prayer, "The Cross-eyed Bear" ("The Cross I'd Bear"). Finally, take the sentences, "Let's eat mother"/"Let's eat, mother."

The presence of word order is apparent in Youngster's own verbalization: "Here ball", "here daddy", "baby here", "dog here", or "more milk", "more up".

(3) Counting. While at this age it will be learning of a special sort, rote memory, he will learn counting in order from songs such as "One Little, Two Little, Three Little Indians."

(4) Self-control. It is necessary to really listen and attend to what the music says in order to carry out the actions. When it says "clap", "jump", or "stop", he must translate what he has heard and clap, jump or stop.

We urge you to make music a family affair. Before the days of television, families created their own entertainment, and singing together was very popular. Develop your own Song Book from current rhythms, folk-rock and include old timers.



Toward Finer Concentration

There is an interesting difference between infant intelligence tests and those taken by school children. The baby tests give high marks to a child who is alert and interested in everything around him. But a school age child does better on his test (and better in school) if he can focus his attention on the task at hand and ignore the rest of the world for awhile. At both ages the tests are intended mainly to predict how well a child will be able to learn. But the

change in the test from one age to the other points up a fact about growing up. As a child gets older, life requires him more and more to be able to concentrate on a single job and get it done.

Youngster is already meeting increased expectations in this regard. You expect him to pay more attention to his eating and spend less time gawking around. Bathing is probably more work and less play than earlier. The toys that challenge him now require closer attention to detail. Control of attention is thus a developing process skill like those we talked about last month.



There are many ways to encourage moments of longer attention on Youngster's part, but one of the best ways is to involve him in an interesting and absorbing game. A game that does this is called the Feeling Game. Place three differently shaped toys under a blanket. They might be a small ball, a block, and a doll. Then find a fourth toy that is just like one of the hidden toys (or as close to it as possible). Show him this toy and say, "There is a toy just like this under the blanket. Reach under the blanket and try to find it. But don't look, just feel."

While you hold the blanket so that Youngster's hands stay covered, encourage him to feel each toy in turn and decide which is the right one. Then he should pull out the chosen toy and see if it matches the one on top. If it does you can exclaim about how good he is or give him a little reward if you are used to doing so. Or just making the

match may be reward enough. If he doesn't get the right toy, show him all three of the covered toys so he can see what a true match looks like. Then cover all three up again, mix them around and let him try again.

The feeling game has some advantages over matching by looking. The main one right now is that it slows Youngster down and makes him concentrate. This is because it takes longer for hands to feel a shape than for the eyes to see it. Since the eyes can see a shape quickly it is all too easy to take a quick look at something and then decide, even though that quick look could be wrong. But when Youngster runs his fingers over the toys, he must build up a picture of them in his mind over a period of time, so he must concentrate a little longer than he would by just looking.

For another thing, the game is new and different. You can keep it fun by playing it only once or twice at a session. It is best to quit with Youngster wanting more. That way he will ask you to play the game rather than vice versa.

Finally, the game encourages him to make a match between one of his senses (touch) and another (vision). This is the passing of information from one sense to another that we mentioned last month and will talk about again in the future. It is a skill that helps to make human beings unique, and is very important in school learning.

It is important to start very easy so Youngster can be successful the very first time. Begin with toys that you are sure he can tell apart by feel. Then you can use your own judgment in making the toys more nearly the same to challenge him.

There are two variations of the game that will work almost as well. One is to use a single familiar object under the blanket and ask him to tell you what it is. The other is to use a single object whose name he doesn't know, but with two or

three visible choice above the blanket. After feeling the covered object, he should point to the object on top that is just like the one he felt. But since he feels only one thing in these variations he doesn't have to concentrate as long. If this lets him answer too quickly it may be better to go back to the form where there are three hidden toys.



Bits 'n Pieces

Margaret Mead, a noted anthropologist who has studied children, parents and methods of child-raising among many races of people, was asked what she thought were the characteristics of a good mother. She replied with a short list of what she considered "valuable capacities for a mother to have." These capacities would be equally valuable for fathers!

"To treat each child as an individual person; to realize that children are not adjuncts to their parents but are individuals in their own right."

"To set a child's feet on her own path and allow her to follow it, yet to be there when that path seems hard to follow."

"To be willing to listen, and listen, and listen."

"To be brave enough to show disapproval when one feels that something is wrong, even though by doing so one may be risking rejection by the child."

"To stand up for one's own beliefs and so make one's respect for a child worth having and keeping."

Is Dressing Your Child Getting To Be a Real Hassle?

Dressing a two-and-a-half year old child can be enough to try the patience of Job! His demands for independence alternate unpredictably with times of complete dependence when he goes limp, says he's a doll or baby and refuses to help at all! Temper tantrums are common

during dressing as Mommy pushes against time and Youngster balks, dawdles, or even runs away.

Running away as soon as Mommy starts dressing him is a favorite game of children of this age period. Two-and-a-half loves to be chased—and as soon as he is caught and brought back, he runs away again.

If caught, picked up and forcibly returned to the dressing spot he may throw a temper tantrum—or simply pull, tug, squirm and wiggle until Mother reaches a point of total exasperation.

Be smart—and change the game. Instead of chasing Two-and-a-half, turn the tables and let him follow you.

Follow Two-and-a-half deliberately and say something like, "Come to the bathroom when you are ready to get dressed." Then leave and return to the bathroom (or wherever) closing doors behind you. This usually brings Two-and-a-half running almost immediately, crying "I'm ready! I'm ready!" When he finds you in the bathroom close the door—even lock it if Two-and-a-half is really fast moving! It helps, too, to stand Two-and-a-half on the lid to the toilet seat, or seat him on a high clothes hamper. He doesn't want to fall so he tends to settle down. Also, he wants dressing over so that he can get down again.

Boy/Girl Toys vs. Children's Toys

Two-and-a-half is busy learn-



ing about living. Speech is developing with a rush. He talks to himself almost constantly as he plays. His experiences are still limited so he talks and plays about what he has seen, heard and experienced. At this age the child's experiences have largely been centered in and around the home. It is natural and normal then for all children to be interested in dolls (child care) or substitutes (teddy bear or stuffed animal) and their associated doll beds, carriages, etc. The child is also interested in the delivery trucks and other trucks which operate through the neighborhood. As a child, then, doll play is perfectly compatible with truck play—the one is not "sissy" for boys nor the other "tomboyish" for girls. Regardless of sex, each child needs toys which reflect his or her total environment so that he or she can practice and learn the associated language and behaviors through play.



Kinds of Child Raising

A few years ago a huge study was done by a child psychologist named Robert Sears. He and his partners interviewed nearly four hundred mothers of 5 year olds about the way they had raised their youngsters.

The researchers wanted to know how parents differed from one another in raising children and what effect their handling of such matters as feeding, toilet training, dependence vs. independence, and aggression had on their preschoolers behavior. While the mothers' recollections may sometimes have been biased or inaccurate, some interesting findings emerged.

First of all, early feeding methods, such as breast vs. bottle feeding, or the age at which solid foods were started seemed to have little effect on whether a child had later feeding problems. But children with feeding problems tended to have

mothers who were strict in their training, including toilet training, resisted their offspring's clinging or desires for attention, and showed little warmth or affection for their children.

Many children were upset by toilet training that placed high expectations on them at an early age. They often showed bed wetting later. But both effects were reduced if mothers who started training early also treated their toddlers in a warm and gentle way during the process. It is noteworthy that while toilet training had an effect on children's later behavior, the mother's total personality seemed to be more important.

In fact it turned out that a mother's toilet training methods told a lot about how she acted toward her youngster in general. Mothers who were harsh and demanding in their toilet training also put great pressure on their youngsters to use good table manners, be neat and orderly, be careful of the furniture and stay quiet. They were more likely than lenient mothers to punish their children severely for disobeying rules, and they tended to reason less with their children.

This led Sears to suggest that feeding, toilet training, or any other kind of training cannot be thought of all by itself as a cause of a child's personality, since one kind of training tends to go along with a whole set of other child-rearing practices.

In general, the amount of strictness or permissiveness used in child raising was one of the best ways he found to describe different parents. Another factor, partly separate from permissiveness, was the amount of warmth mothers showed to their children. It was partly separate because a mother could be strict in her rules but still be warm and loving toward her child, or vice versa. Still another factor (among several others) was general family adjustment. That meant how well the parents

thought of themselves and each other and how satisfied they were with their role of being parents.

It is tempting to think that people's personalities are shaped by certain pleasant or unpleasant episodes that happened in their early childhood. This is probably true for very specific behaviors, like an adult's unreasonable fear of dogs after a frightening experience with a dog as a child. But for the whole personality, it is unlikely that a single event or even a series of events like toilet training will have much effect. It is hard to tell the influence of a particular child-raising action because, as we have seen, it often goes along with other ways a parent acts. But the very fact that many of these behaviors are related to each other makes it more probable that none of them alone is too important. Instead, it is the overall attitude and approach that parents take to their children, over many months or years, that determines what their children will be like.

In *Growing Child* we give many suggestions for things to do every month. There are probably quite a few that you haven't been able to do, for one reason or another. But as we have tried to suggest with this article, the development of your child does not hinge upon any one thing we recommend. The total approach is what is important. If you can learn in general how best to react to your child and how to provide him with appropriate experiences, much of the basic purpose of *Growing Child* will be accomplished as the years go by. That is, to make your child happier and more able as he grows. Sometimes we talk a lot about general principles before giving specific suggestions. This is to give you a better picture of the approach involved. Knowing the big picture, you can develop your own ideas and cover your own situation in a way that space does not permit us to do.



Hang On—But Don't Get Hung Up!

Believe it or not, most of us at *Growing Child* are parents, too. We know what it is to worry about how well our children are doing and we also know how good it is to enjoy and savor our children's growing experiences. In every child's growing up there are ups and downs. One day you think he'll surely be President some day. The next day you think you'll be lucky if he manages to stay out of jail. These wild swings between good and bad feelings about your child are all part of the business of being a parent. It is a truly great experience, but at the same time, being a parent can sometimes drive you up the wall.

May we assure you such wild swings in your feelings are perfectly normal. We know that you sometimes wonder if you're doing the right thing because we have wondered the same thing about ourselves.

What we're really trying to say is that we do not write for *Growing Child* in a vacuum. We are with you in all your suffering and your delights because we have been precisely where you are now. We know the joys of seeing our children grow and learn and we also know the agony of how many mistakes we have made as parents. These feelings, some good and some painful, are all part of being parents. It "goes with the territory."

Our practical advice to you is simply this: "Hang on, but don't get hung-up." Hang on because: (1) You know that almost every parent has felt what you are feeling now; (2) There are so many good things about your child's growing and development which can give you pleasure; (3) One or two problems now are not going to warp your child forever.

Hang on by: (1) Living with

your child from day-to-day; (2) Enjoying him, by laughing with him, by holding him close when the dark things close in upon both of you; (3) Simply getting through the ordinary routines of each day. However you do it, please hang on. If you ever feel you cannot hang on any longer, talk to a close friend or other parents who can share their own experiences in hanging on.

But, whatever you do, please do not get "hung-up". Do not mentally bite your fingernails or waste your emotional energy in wondering if you are a "good parent", whatever that means. Do not hover over your child. Do not constantly ask yourself, "Is he doing all right?" Above all, do not pressure your child into performing at ever-higher levels. Do not make him feel that you love him only if he performs well. He should know that you love him because he belongs to you.



He is your child; he belongs to you and he is important to you because he is "flesh of your flesh and bone of your bone" as the Old Testament puts it. The knowledge that he matters, that he is loved for himself alone, is the greatest gift you can give your child. But you cannot give your child this gift if you are hung-up over how well he is doing.

Not too long ago a mother wrote us and asked us to cancel her subscription to *Growing Child*. She said that her child was so far behind schedule that each issue of our newsletter

made her just a little sadder. One of our publishers (who is a parent, too) wrote her a letter which said we would continue sending *Growing Child* without charge. This proves that some publishers are human. The point is that this mother was hung-up about the fact that her child was behind schedule in his development.

We think that getting hung-up about your child's performance is one of the worst things you can do. If you are hung-up, it is impossible for you to keep this fact from him. In some mysterious way he senses this and this knowledge makes him feel hung up, too.

Above all, let Youngster know in a hundred different ways that you love him. Show him that he matters and that he belongs. Show him that he is a vital part of your world. If you do this we think you will greatly improve his chances for success in school and also in the world beyond school.



Dear: GROWING Child

*"I've never been so crazy about any publication before *Growing Child* found it's way into our home. It's a whole new world for me and our baby.*

"It's such a pleasure to have a practical 'guide to development' that's so much fun.

"Today we put J. in front of a full-length mirror and the way she reacted cannot be described! It was priceless, she 'talked' and laughed and reached for her mirror image as if it were a new friend.

"Thank you for another wonderful issue!"

*Mrs. B.M.
Brigantine, NJ*



Next Month

- Lost Child
- Simple Science
- A Special Time

GROWING Child.

1/87

Growing Child®

2 Years
7 Months

Lost Child

The "Terrible Twos"—particularly the second half of that trying year—probably produces more lost children than any other age. More frantic parents, too, we suspect, because even the slightly older child is better able to cope with separation from his parents.

That the 30-36 month old toddler is a prime candidate for "lost-ness" is not surprising when we remember that he is characterized by the contradictory extremes of behavior which we discussed last month. He runs ahead, lags behind, stops to look and touch, then may take off in another direction to explore something which has attracted his interest. For the moment—and for most moments!—nothing exists for him except the trying out of moving fast vs. moving slow or the immediate impulse to explore the unfamiliar. In a crowd, a child this age is on the ragged edge of being lost. He is a catastrophe just waiting to happen!

Parents are only human and can also be distracted for the moment it takes for child and parent to lose contact. When the child is found—usually only moments later—when our toddler begins to wail loudly—both are relieved, the child is comforted and the parent takes tighter security measures.

But sometimes it doesn't work out so easily. When the dawdling child looks for his parents, they are GONE! And with them has gone his whole world. He is small—and lost in a forest of moving, unfamiliar and uncaring big people. Where are Mommy and Daddy! They are always there in the world as he knows it! Now his whole world is shattered. How could they leave

him? Don't they love him any more? Have they gone forever? Sheer panic strikes. At this point most children will cry loudly and push here and there calling, "Mommy! Daddy! I want my Mommy!" These children are conspicuous and readily recognized as "lost". Some Good Samaritan will comfort him and take steps to reunite him with his lost parents. And always remember—to the child it is his parents who are lost!

But a child may simply freeze in terror at this sudden loss of security and simply stand there, jostled by the crowd with silent tears rolling down his cheeks. Another child may cower in fear and to escape the crowd may crawl under or into any small enclosed space to hide. These children may take hours to find.

And what of the parents during this time? Worried, fearful for the child's safety, angry at his disappearance, angry at themselves for letting it happen, impatient at the time lost, and angry at the thought that the "lost" child's publicity reflects on their carelessness. It is this strange mixture of worry, fear, guilt and anger that produces such a mixture of parent response when the child is found.

A recent example was seen in a local discount house. Lost child's description had been broadcast and the parents were arriving to get him. The child, face streaked with tears but now shining with relief and joy at finding his parents, ran toward them calling, "Mommy! Daddy!" But as he threw himself at them in love and excited relief, his father grabbed his arms roughly and saying, "I'll teach you to run away!" turned him over his knee and paddled him soundly. Tired,

anxious, guilty, exasperated parents! Perhaps this incident relieved the father's feelings—but what did it do to the child?

So, what to do to prevent the accidental separation of parent and child? For in effect each has been "lost" to the other.

Few families with young children have built-in babysitters these days, yet there is necessary shopping to do and other pressing reasons for taking the 2½ year old into crowded, busy places. So here are a few suggestions:



If you are using a shopping cart place your accident-about-to-happen in the seat provided. (While this is an effective method of keeping track of Youngster, it does have some drawbacks. An article appears in month 32 with further comments.)

Many discount houses and department stores provide strollers for young children. Use one! This is particularly important if you have a lot to do. How often have you seen a tired, distracted mother yanking a tired, whining child along—while a wiser parent wheels a happy interested child past in a stroller.

A third alternative—and one which offers many advantages—is the use of a child's harness and lead. We can just see you rear back in shock at the very idea of putting your child on a leash like

a dog! Please relax! The owner of a pet values his safety and uses a leash to insure that safety plus activity within limits. Do you value your child less?

Child's harnesses are not always easy to find but there are easy alternatives: An old leather belt of Daddy's cut down to fit will take the snap ring of an inexpensive leather leash through the buckle. Slip the loop at the other end over your wrist and presto! You and your precious child are linked together safely while your hands are free to do whatever you need to do. No old leather belt? Make one from cloth, buy a boy's belt, or even make a temporary one to try out the idea. Take an old dish towel, fold it lengthways several times and pin it firmly around your child's waist. Then pull the snap ring of the leash under the towel and snap it over the leash itself. Or use a piece of clothesline tied firmly through the "belt". But be sure to make a loop at the other end so that you can slip it over your wrist.

Now—just in case your child does get lost, teach him his full name. Make a game of it. "What's your name, little girl/boy?" Later add, "What's Daddy's name?" and "Where do you live?" The last becomes very important if you are a family who must move frequently.

Which reminds us—we once saw a family moving into an apartment—with a 2-3 year old child. Doors were open, furniture was being carried in, mother was busy. But the little boy wore a harness and was snugly leashed to a small tree. There, from a shady place he could watch everything that went on—in safety. The movers were not distracted by the problem of a curious child underfoot. Mother could cope with the problem of moving in without worrying about her child. Everything went smoothly.

Finally, should you and your child get "lost" from each other, remember that it can happen to anyone. Try to "keep your cool"—and at the moment of

reunion let your child know that you are as happy to find him as he is happy to find you.

Simple Science

For several months now, Youngster has been able to think a little bit abstractly. This means picturing things in his mind without having to see an event actually take place. Thinking abstractly lets him plan ahead and make simple predictions about things that will happen. For example, if he sees one object moving toward another, he knows they will collide unless something stops the object or makes it change direction. He also knows what he is supposed to do and not do and has a good understanding of what will happen if he behaves the wrong way, even if he has not been punished for a particular infraction before.

With his understanding of things unseen, Youngster can begin to appreciate quite a few household happenings that illustrate, in a simple way, some basic scientific principles. By appreciate, we mean he can tell you what is happening without fully understanding why. He does more than simply accept and live with a happening as he did several months ago. He can now explain, in simple language, what is going on, even though he is far from understanding the scientific explanation.

While Youngster watches, place a dry sponge in a saucer full of water. Before his eyes the water will disappear. Ask him where the water went. If he can't tell you, let him handle the sponge. After a poke and certainly a squeeze, he should be able to tell you that the water went into the sponge. Help him squeeze the water back into the saucer, then let him place the sponge in the saucer to re-draw the water. This is a reversible effect like several we have talked about in the past. After a little experience with the sponge and water, Youngster should have no trouble telling you that the water goes into the

sponge. This shows his appreciation of a principle even though he (and many adults) cannot explain just why the effect occurs.

Some of Youngster's more common experiences should allow him to make some simple predictions. Point to either the cold or hot water handle of the sink or bathtub. Can Youngster tell you whether it would make the hot or the cold water come out? Here Youngster has to make the fairly abstract connection between the position of the handle and the temperature of the water.

Youngster has had enough practice at lifting and carrying things that he should know roughly how big and heavy an object he can manage. If you point to an object and ask him, "Can you lift that?", making him reply before he tries, you are likely to get an accurate answer as long as you use fairly big or small objects. If the object is just a little more than he can lift, he will probably say that he can lift it. His eyes will prove to be bigger than his muscles.



Another kind of prediction is about how much an empty box will hold. Using a cigar box or small cardboard box, preferably one with a top that swings up to open, point to several toys one by one and ask him if each will fit in the box when the lid is closed. If you played the size discrimination game we described in Month 27, this should be easy, as long as you use toys that are definitely small enough or else much too large. If Youngster hasn't had such practice in judgment you will need extra

Play Things



2 years 7 months

Pretending to be... Anybody!

The importance of make-believe in your child's world

Matthew grabs a big cardboard box and decides to go to the "store." He pushes the box around the living room, looking for the "groceries" his family needs—a plastic cup, a newspaper, a toy—and drops them into the box. He pretends to pay for his purchases, and then proudly tells his parents, "I've got our food!"

Make-believe is a necessary facet of your child's play. Pretending gives Youngster the chance to: Imitate adults to help him understand his environment; re-enact familiar situations, both good and bad, as a way of dealing with emotions; develop his imagination by creating fantasies; and, learn about himself as an individual and how he fits into society.

When your child pretends, he isn't the recipient of outside commands or controls—he's *in control!* So he can take his everyday, routine world and turn it into a magic place. Your child will start by imitating *you* around the house, and will progress through the years to more "dramatic acting"—possibly even becoming a commander of a vital space mission to Mars!



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A *The Teddy Bears' Picnic*, by Jimmy Kennedy. Illustrated by Alexandra Day. "If you go down in the woods today You're sure of a big surprise..."

If you don't remember this song, your child's grandparents probably do. Originally composed in 1907, this classic has been brought to life in this gorgeous book for all children to enjoy.

A suite of 24 paintings tell the story of the song's lyrics. Together the words and pictures make a splendid tribute to the teddy bears of the world. To complement the book, your child will enjoy singing along with the accompanying record, featuring Bing Crosby.

Every child deserves a loving book about teddy bears, and this is possibly the most delightful edition you will find. A true keepsake that belongs on every youngster's bookshelf.

Hardbound, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", full color, 30 pp. 2-6 yrs.

RL316 Book and Record \$15.00



B *You Are Special*, by Mister Rogers. Everyone likes to receive compliments, and from time to time, we all need a special boost to our self-esteem. Children especially deserve attention because their early image of themselves is the basis of their self-image in adulthood.

Mister Rogers is known by a vast audience of youngsters and is one of the best resources our society has for encouraging little ones to feel good about themselves.

This album is a collection of some of his most popular and familiar songs, such as "We Welcome You Today" and "You Are Special."

All the tunes are written and performed by Mister Rogers in his warm, friendly style, and they're designed to help build your child's self-confidence.

13 songs. 2-6 yrs.

RL794 LP \$7.00
RL797 Cassette \$7.00



C *Library of Congress Children's Book of the Year*
Airport, by Byron Barton.

Fly away! This bright, bold picture book takes your child to a place she may not have visited before—one of the best functions a book can serve for your youngster.

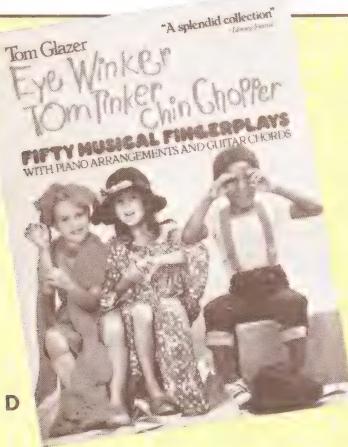
The simple, colorful illustrations explain the process of "taking a flight"—from checking in at the airport, to loading the airplane, to the thrill of taking off from the runway.

For the child who hasn't flown, *Airport* gives some very exciting information. Airports, planes, and flying are a vital part of our society. For the child who does travel, this book helps detail Youngster's memories of those exciting experiences.

Hardbound, 10" x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", full color, 40 pp. 2-5 yrs.

RL218 \$11.00

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D

D **Eye Winker, Tom Tinker, Chin Chopper**, by Tom Glazer. Tom Glazer, one of the most well-known performers of children's music, has put together this complete collection of 50 musical fingerplays.

A fingerplay is a patterned movement of fingers in coordination with the words of a song or rhyme. Not only is this a form of entertainment, it helps children build language skills and a sense of rhythm.

Included are familiar songs, some lovely not-so-familiar songs, and famous folk songs with brand new fingerplays. Piano accompaniments and guitar chords are given along with instructions and extra lyrics.

Paperback, 7" x 9 1/4", 91 pp. All ages.
RLS10 \$4.00

E Play Family

Creating play situations for toy "people" is a universal part of childhood for boys and girls alike. It serves partly to re-create their own daily experiences, and partly to try out different ways of acting while pretending to be other people.

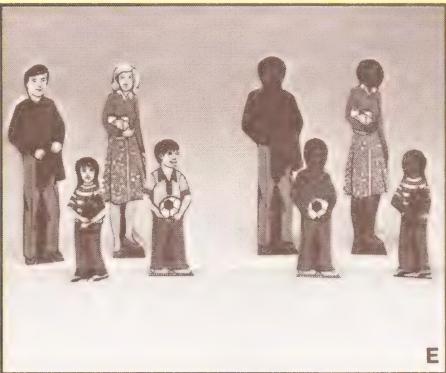
This set of realistic figures will help your child act out these roles. Included are a father, mother, girl and boy—all made of sturdy wood, painted on the front and back. They'll last through all the years of your child's pretend play.

Adults, 5 1/4" tall. 2-8 yrs.
RLJ5 Black Family \$7.00
RLJ6 White Family \$7.00

F Traffic Signs

These authentic replicas of official traffic signs are important accessories for blocks, play vehicles or our **Playmat**.

They give variety to your child's make-believe play—he'll create new and different imaginative situations. At the same time, Toddler is learning



E



F



to respect rules by learning and understanding the signs' meanings and importance. They add to the realism of transportation play by enabling Youngster to follow grown-up rules of the road.

13 signs, tallest is 7". 2 1/2-8 yrs.
RLK19 \$18.00

G Wooden Play Vehicles

Your child will treasure these hand-sized vehicles she can carry around, or play with where space is limited. Made of sturdy, solid white pine, they're painted in bright colors and have smooth rolling wheels. Youngster can learn the names and real-life uses for the police car, fire truck and school bus.

These toys encourage floor play, which develops your child's motor skills and coordination. Perfect for traveling the roads of our **Playmat**.

Made in Vermont by American Craftsmen.
 Each is 3 3/4" long. 2-6 yrs.
RL973 \$8.75

H Playmat

Children love to pretend-play in real-life situations. For maximum fun, they need a background that isn't too cramped, nor so large that everything gets out of control.

This colorful village landscape sets the stage for hours of imaginative play for one or several children.

Playmat also helps your child to understand the relationship between make-believe and real-life, and the concept of space. This includes such things as the relationship of objects to each other in the environment, distance, direction, and perspective.

Wash-off plastic, 4' x 5'. 2-8 yrs.
RLM11 \$11.50

Save over \$3.00 when you order the Complete "Let's Pretend Set"—Playmat, Traffic Signs, Play Family and Play Vehicles. A perfect gift idea!

RLL15 with White Family \$42.00
RLL16 with Black Family \$42.00



Our Guarantee

Our Guarantee is simple! We promise 100% satisfaction or your money back, anytime, for any reason. We want you to be completely satisfied with everything you get from Growing Child. **All Growing Child Playthings are sturdy, safe, and non-toxic.**

Growing Child
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Prices good through August 1987.



small and large toys in order for him to be accurate. As in other activities, a little reward will do wonders to improve his accuracy and carefulness. As he gets better you can make the toys' sizes closer to the actual capacity of the box.

Another prediction about the physics of Youngster's own abilities concerns blowing. You might ask Youngster, "Can you blow this little piece of paper off the table?" And, "Do you think you can blow this block off the table?" Be sure that he gives you an opinion before he tries.

Hold a toy car or small ball at the top of a sloping board. Aim the board at one of three toys placed near the foot of the board. Ask him to show you which toy the car would hit if you let it go. When the car is released, his accuracy (or yours) will be determined.

You can put a little doll in a closed glass jar, then place the jar in a large container of water. Before immersing the jar, ask Youngster, "Will the doll get wet?" If he correctly says no, you might ask him why not. His answer won't be very clearly expressed but he may get across the idea that the jar keeps the water out. Another question from you might follow: "What if I punch a hole in the lid?" If you submerge the doll, both without and with a hole in the lid, Youngster will have a dramatic demonstration of what it takes to keep the water out.

Lay a piece of paper across a bowl filled with water. "Will the doll get wet if we let her sit on the paper?" If he gets this right, you can place two or three table knives or small sticks across the opening of the bowl, cover them with the paper and repeat the question. The scientific principle here is the weight-supporting qualities of the various materials. You can also use heavy paper and cardboard of various strengths, let Youngster test their stiffness upon the bowl by poking them with his

finger, then ask him the question about whether they will support the doll.

If a short piece of board is laid upon a block, two objects of similar weight can be placed at each end of the board so that they balance. Then take a third object and hold it over one end of the board. Ask Youngster, "If I put this toy here, what will happen to this end of the board?" Unless he has had experience with such things, Youngster will not be able to tell you that the end will "go down." But you can demonstrate the effect and say, "Look, the board went down!" (You might call it a teeter-totter if he knows what that is.) Similarly, you could ask him which end will go down if you lift the object from one end. This is a more difficult idea than that of weighting down one end of the balance by adding an object.

The board can also be used to demonstrate the principle of a round object rolling down an incline. First, lay the board flat on the floor. With a ball in your hand, point to one end of the board and ask, "If I put the ball here, will it roll to the other end?" Regardless of Youngster's answer, place the ball on the board to confirm whether he was right or not. The next step is to place a large block under one end of the board to make a very obvious incline. Again, the question and the demonstration to illustrate the principle of the incline. Check his understanding by placing the block at first one end and then the other, asking him to point to the end on which the ball must be placed so that it will roll down the board. Finally, support the board on two blocks or other objects of slightly different heights. Youngster must now judge which end of the board is higher in order to say which end should be the starting point for the ball. The difficulty can be adjusted to Youngster's particular level of ability by vary-

ing the difference in size of the two supporting objects.

In all of these learning situations, the proof of Youngster's understanding is whether he can apply his knowledge to new situations. After he has learned the principle of the water going into the sponge, for instance, substitute a dry rag for the sponge and see if he can tell you correctly where the water went. The teeter-totter should be made of new materials, and different objects used to balance its end. A large book held in the hands might be substituted for the sloping board. Youngster should be asked to place the ball on the book in the right place for it to roll.

An understanding which can be applied in many situations is called a generalization. An understanding or ability which can be applied to only one situation is called a specific skill or sometimes a splinter skill. Most of the things that Youngster needs to learn right now are generalizations. Generalizations give him the background to learn many complicated things later on. Giving Youngster the chance to try out his knowledge in different situations is the way to develop the generalizations that will make him an adaptable and resourceful human being.



A Special Time

Youngster's major incentive for talking is his need to say something to somebody. Parents should be a real audience, without pretense, even if the child produces only a few short sentences at a time. It is from these informal experiences that more formal language emerges. Many parents who are home-makers think that because they are with the child most of the time that they, in fact, give him an audience. However, if one examines the routine of an average home, Mother or Dad is

involved with answering the door and telephone, washing clothes and dishes, making beds and dinner. What is really necessary is a "Special Time", however brief. This Special Time differs from the rest of the day because it belongs to Youngster exclusively. He isn't interrupting your work just to get attention. Special Time is special—it may even be considered therapeutic because it is devoted to listening and attending to the child. Of course, this means privacy—no answering phones or checking on food in the oven. How much time is required? Only fifteen minutes a day. That's about the maximum that parent and child can stimulate each other at this age. It is well to plan for Special Time.

(1) Explain what it is—you both will be together and he or she can tell or show you what he wants to do. It is very important that you do not dictate the program, otherwise you will defeat the objective. When he must tell you what he wants, his mind is active—he is formulating and expressing his ideas and wishes.

(2) Help him to understand about Time generally. If you have a minute clock, set the alarm to go off. Otherwise, show him the face of the clock and point to where Special Time begins and where it ends. If during the day it appears that the child wants your attention and you are occupied, remind him about the approaching Special Time. If it is a regular habit, he will be content to wait.



Finally, because all good things end too soon, prepare him for

the end of Special Time. Even if he has no awareness of "five more minutes before we finish", continued use of such a warning will alert him to the fact that it is almost over. Thus, in planning Special Time we are educating Youngster to a temporal order—anticipation of Special Time each day; the length of time he will have your undivided attention each day—when it begins and ends; and the reminder about how soon it will be over.

(3) It may be necessary to set limits on what can or cannot be done during Special Time, especially if the child is inclined to persevere such as wanting to hear the same book every day for two weeks. You may still allow him his choice while setting limits if you tell him honestly, "I'm tired of that book. Let's do something different in Special Time."

(4) As Youngster grows older, he will want to talk more—to express his feelings and to know that you are truly listening. Prepare yourself to be a good audience; this means active listening and avoiding the tendency to sermonize.



Dear Growing Child

"My husband and I would like to thank you for such a wonderful publication. We look forward to each new issue, read it avidly and repeatedly, and hopefully learn something! We especially appreciate the monthly "break-down" of what to do, what to expect, and how to help, as our son develops.

Thank you for being such thoughtful, caring people."

Sincerely,

*Mrs. D. T.
Bellaire, TX 77401*



Next Month

- Thinking of Teeth
- Bedtime Hassle
- Your Self-Confidence As a Parent

Growing Child.

2/87

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Growing Child®

2 Years
8 Months

On Novelty

Young children respond to new events in their lives in ways that can't always be predicted. One city child may eagerly explore everything in sight on his visit to a farm while another finds the animals strange and frightening, the sounds and smells unpleasant. Or the same child may dislike the visit to one stranger's house but accept a visit to another's. Much of this has to do with the feeling of security the child has in a particular situation. This in turn depends a great deal on how the new situation differs from what he knows and is used to.



If we could always see the world the way Youngster sees it, it would be much easier to explain his behavior. Failing that, an understanding of how a great many children behave at a given age helps provide clues to Youngster's feelings and needs.

Youngster seems to do best with a certain combination of sameness and variety. First of all, there are some activities where Youngster demands a highly structured routine. He wants to do things the same way each time and he gets upset if the routine is changed even a little bit. This is most evident

in the bedtime ritual, but he also shows a desire for routine at meals and in his style of using the potty. These activities are the ones that satisfy his most basic physical needs. Adults have long since taken these functions for granted, but not so with Youngster. He feels very keenly that they have to do with his well being, with his dependent-on-others existence. As a result, they arouse strong emotional feelings for Youngster. In eating, sleeping and eliminating he is sensitive to the amount of his parents' love and concern. Predictability means security to him. If his basic needs are always met in the same way, he is able to face the rest of the world with much more confidence.

After this relatively stable part of his life, there is the world of ideas. Here a little more variety is looked for by Youngster, but even so he starts out with the security of fixed ideas. After discovering that a toy car has wheels and can roll, he spends some time strengthening this idea by rolling it back and forth under his hand and giving it short pushes. Only later does he begin the inevitable variations, like rolling it upon all kinds of new surfaces or letting it coast down an incline.

Once the basic idea is down pat, variations are interesting and a challenge for him. But just so much change and not too much. In Month 5, we noted that Baby is most interested in new faces that are slightly different from those he is used to. If he is shown a face or a picture that is too much different, he loses interest. The same is true for Youngster and even for adults. We all

like things which are new but that tie in with what we already know. If something is too unfamiliar, we can't handle it. For instance, we rarely find it pleasant to read an article about a subject with which we are completely unfamiliar.

For Youngster, a completely new toy may not be appreciated during the period that he is still trying out the possibilities of an old one. Therefore, it is best to give new toys to Youngster one at a time, at least a day or two apart, even though you may have bought him two or more toys at once.

Sometimes Youngster may not be ready for the advanced ideas that a new toy entails. If so, he will use it at his present level. A father who bought his not-yet-three year old a fancy battery-powered electric car was dismayed to see his son continue to push the car around by hand. The child was operating at one level and was not ready for the novelty of such a completely new idea.

There are few times when novelty is so great or so complete as when you take Youngster on a trip away from home. The only familiar things are his parents and the car, and even these seem different as new scenery rushes by and the conversation focuses on trip-related topics. The most difficult situation of all for Youngster is sleeping in a strange place, whether in a motel or at someone's house. At such a time, his feeling of security will be greatly increased if you surround him with some things brought from home, especially from his own bedroom. You would probably think to take along a few of his favorite toys

and picture books to keep him entertained while riding in the car. But bedtime on the road should not be overlooked either. The strangeness of a new bed can be softened by substituting Youngster's own pillow, and giving him whatever he normally takes to bed with him, like a teddy bear. Throughout the trip, the softness of a familiar fabric like a small blanket or an afghan can be enormously comforting to him.



Of course, the most comforting thing of all is your own presence. So it is well to stay within range of his voice whenever possible. Then he can be assured that no matter what else changes, one thing stays the same: Mommy and Daddy are always near when he needs them.

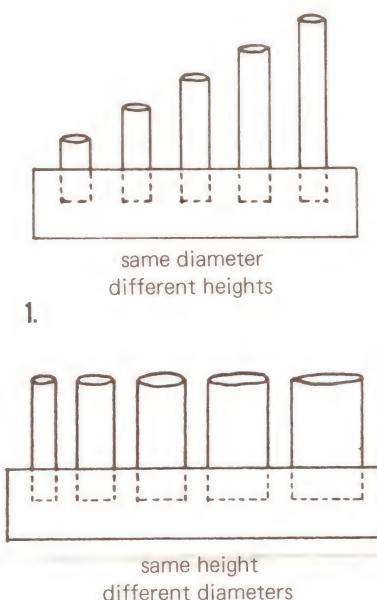


Concepts in Space

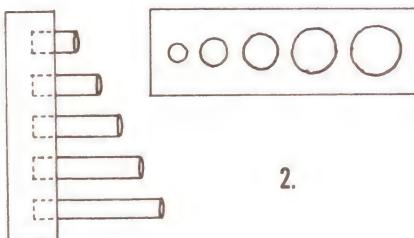
Through movements of his own body in space (under sofas, on top of chairs and tables, squeezed into a bookshelf, getting out of the crib and tub), Youngster has become familiar with space relationships. Now we must help him label them appropriately and recognize them when he manipulates objects and sees representations of them in pictures.

At age 32 months, Youngster is ready for the words "in", "under", "out", "inside", "outside", "top", "bottom", "front", and "back". He won't use them precisely at first but with a few months experience, they will be in his vocabulary.

Practice with materials like the Montessori cylinders which are graduated in height or width will enable Youngster to match percept with label and thus develop the concept. You can make your own toys by sawing up dowel rods and inserting them into matching holes which are drilled into wood or styrofoam.



To make learning fun, make the experience interesting. Rotate the boards so they are used in the vertical and on side positions as well.



Talk about the cylinders which are inside the board and those on the table outside the board. Ask Youngster to take out one at a time. Show him the smallest one at the top and the biggest one on the bottom.

If you're still energetic after Youngster's bedtime, a nice picture book portraying these same concepts will help him to

deal with them in a more abstract way. The pictures may be clipped from magazines, Trading Stamp catalogs or coloring books. They should be simple, however. Some examples: "Kitty is sitting on top of the sink"; the ball rolled under the table"; "Lassie is inside the dog house".



Standard and Black English

Now that Youngster is approaching three, the influence of his culture and environment will be reflected in his speech. Thus, it is time to talk about the differences between Standard and Black English. Because the two Englishes share pretty much the same vocabulary, in the past it was assumed that the language spoken by black people was sub-standard English or inferior speech. As a result of the research of contemporary linguists, we know this is not true. They have found that Black English is a dialect with a quite different grammar and sound system, although to white ears it may sound similar. Unfortunately, the subject of Black English, as it is labelled by professionals of all races, is rarely discussed calmly because it has been tied to racism or well-intentioned liberalism. Thus, for the sake of Growing Child and their parents, let us examine briefly and objectively the two-language situation.

From early American history the English used by black people has been different from that of white people. The further back in time we go, the more different it was. However, it must be said that there have been black people who spoke exactly like whites but this generally has been of recent history.

What do we mean by Black English? First let us say what it is not. It is not a different vocabulary, although there have been many words, slang or jargon, which have become part of

the general vocabulary of speakers of Standard English. We're thinking of words like "dig", "groovy", "square", "jive", "rap", "chick", "rip off", etc.

Black English is a different grammar containing a set of rules which are as complex as those of Standard English and as elegant as whites consider Standard English to be. Let's take one example of a simple sentence, "He eatin." At one time it was thought that this statement was the same as "He's working", except that the final consonant "g" was dropped and the abbreviation for the word "is" omitted. However, we now know that this is not correct. The word "is" isn't utilized much in Black English, rather the auxiliary verb, "be" is emphasized. Consequently, "He be workin" means that he's been working for a long time. The statement "He workin" means that the man is presently working. A speaker of Black English would never say, "He be workin right now". This would be comparable to a speaker of Standard English saying, "He is working tomorrow." And this is only one of the many big differences in the structures of the two Englishes.

It is amazing that the child who speaks Black English manages to survive the difficulties we present him when he starts to read. For the white child, reading is simply spoken English written down as printed symbols. For the speaker of Black English, it is a matter of learning a new and strange dialect before he can begin to make sense out of the printed symbols. In other words, we expect this youngster to be bilingual like immigrant Spanish or French children. Often the attitude has been that white immigrants speak real languages because these languages contain their own dictionaries and literature, and teachers tend to be more tolerant and patient with these children. The black child is corrected for saying, "He

workin" when the book reads, "He's working." In fact, he is rather precocious—he has translated the symbols of Standard English into his own dialect, Black English.

At the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C. a project to evaluate the reading of non-achieving black school children revealed that they could read Black English accurately, fluently and meaningfully because it corresponded with the daily speech they used and heard in their community.

It has been proposed that first Readers be prepared in Black English. Once the child has mastered the principles of reading in the language with which he is familiar, he will find it easy to transfer to books in Standard English. Experiments with such an approach indicate that this is a proposal worthy of consideration. Another experiment which has been successful is the use of parallel readers—Black and Standard versions of the same Readers.

As time goes on we shall talk more about linguistic differences. It is our objective at this time to point up the fact that the speaker of Black English is employing a different code or language and not a deficient one.



Thinking of Teeth

If your doctor hasn't recommended that Youngster visit the dentist, we suggest that you do not delay. About 50% of the populations seeks dental care only in emergency situations. Yet the major causes for dental disease begin in childhood, even before the arrival of the second teeth. We are promoting good teeth in the interest of articulate speech and attractive appearance.

There are reports from all over the U.S. and England about the alarming increase in the number of children under five years of age who have what is called "milk mouth" or "apple juice

mouth" but what is really a condition of decaying teeth. This arises when we permit children to suck on bottles long past the age of weaning or offer the wrong kinds of drinks. Parents are known to fill bottles and glasses with sugar water, fruit juice or soda pop which are sugar fluids. Bacteria, which are always present in the mouth, then utilize these sugar fluids to grow.

Young children often are not able to brush their teeth properly. We might add that since tooth brushing is a motor skill, once learned, it is not forgotten. But toothbrushing must be learned correctly and is difficult to master, as witnessed by the number of adults who have problems. It may be necessary for a parent to accomplish the daily toothbrushing, permitting the child to participate in whatever way he wants, until the skill is learned. Toothbrushing is necessary to remove the accumulation of bacteria, or plaque as it is called. As a prevention the addition of fluoride to the water supply has been recommended. However, how much water does a child consume, especially when we buy more frozen and prepared foods which utilize less water? Probably the most reliable means of preventing tooth decay is to control the amount of carbohydrates that youngsters eat and drink.

Obviously we can't say "no" to all sweets. Such a blanket rule usually makes kids desirous of the forbidden. Rather, have available the kinds of goodies which are both nutritious and less likely to create tooth decay. Then if the sweets we don't favor find their way into Youngster's hands and mouth, the balance won't be too disastrous.



Looking, Listening, Learning

The main idea behind *Growing Child* is this: We want to help your child get ready for school. One way to do this is to tell you all we know about

good child development so your child can grow and learn well. In the early years before school, your child is building the foundations for later school learning. Many research studies show quite clearly that children who develop well in the early years do well in school. These same studies also show that children who develop poorly have trouble later in learning to read, write, spell, and "do" math.

So good development now is most important for your child. If he develops well now, he should learn well later. We are trying to give you a map to the land of good development and hope you will use it to help your very special child develop.

Here are some every-day things to do as you help build good development:

1. At the supermarket: Let him be part of your shopping. Let him share in getting some items and in some simple decisions. Do not let him ride on the cart. Instead let him walk with you through the rich environment of the supermarket.

We get real sad when we see kids riding on the lower part of the cart, hunched down, peering out with dull, unseeing eyes at all the interesting shapes, sizes, and colors of objects all around them. There is some very interesting research which suggests that being wheeled along is not a good learning thing for a child.

Use the supermarket to promote good development. Talk to him about what you and he are doing there (you are getting things which you and he need for breakfast, lunch and dinner). Ask him to help you. He can get some items from the shelf and put them into the cart (with your help, of course.) He can learn to identify certain items (his favorite cereal), and learn where they are located in the supermarket. Ask him to help you find where certain items are located. Then let him go to these places, find the items, and place them in the cart. All this is far superior to wheeling him

passively through the supermarket where he only looks out but does not do anything. When he only looks, he is like a sponge that soaks up sights, sounds, and smells. But when he does things he is developing and growing and learning—and this is the name of the game. He develops best when he is actively involved in doing.

2. In the car: We do not really like cars. A car is just another way of transporting your child passively. But cars are necessary in our present strange way of living. So do what you can to use your car to promote good development.

As you and he drive through your neighborhood, talk to him about the major landmarks which he can see. Billy lives here and Susie lives there. Try to determine if he really has the idea about where Billy and Susie live. There are other landmarks which should be important to him: Your bank, your service station, the post office, where the supermarket is (and let him tell you how to get to all these places from your house), where your friends' houses are located, etc. The main idea is that you talk to him at times such as these so that he gets the basic connection between the language he hears and says and the things he sees as you drive from place to place.

3. At home: In any home there are many things which happen all the time, and many of these happenings can be turned into good learning experiences. For instance, there is always the laundry.

Laundry activities can be great learning experiences. For instance, you put clothes in the washer. Can he help you do this? You pour detergent into a measuring cup. Can he learn to do this? You set the dials and push the buttons. Can he do some of these things? You take the clothes out of the washer and put them into the dryer. Let him open the dryer door, put the clothes in the

dryer, close the door and push the start button.

In doing things with the laundry he develops a sense of order. His thinking is stimulated as he does his part. He



begins to understand how all these activities make sense. But the best part of laundry learning comes after the dryer has stopped. Then the clothes must be removed, folded, sorted and finally put away. At this point much good learning can happen if you know the secrets for making it happen.

The biggest secret is to let him do as many of the activities as he can. Let him take the clothes from the dryer and help you fold them. Help him sort the clothes into appropriate piles because sorting is an extremely important ability. When he learns to sort he is actually learning about categories. When he learns about categories, he is beginning to develop his first tentative abilities to do abstract thinking. Here is a stack of sheets, here is a stack of towels, here are dad's socks, here are sister's socks, etc. If you will help him learn to sort the clothes in your laundry you will surely help him begin to learn how to do abstract thinking later in school.

But there are even more good learning experiences from the home laundry. After the clothes are sorted they must be put away. Help him learn where things go, and teach him to get the various categories in the correct places. Dad's socks go in this drawer. The towels

go here in the linen closet. The sheets go over there. His undershirts go in this drawer, etc. As he learns that the different kinds of laundry go in particular places he is really learning about the location of objects in space.

And you remember how we said long ago that learning to organize relationships among objects in space is essential for learning to read well? Many children with serious reading problems have difficulty in telling "b" from "d". The real problem, we have found, is that these children have general problems in organizing relationships among objects in space. The only difference between "b" and "d" is the difference between "left" and "right" in space. Thus for children with serious reading problems their whole space world is either disorganized or it is organized inefficiently. Can you see why we think it's so important for your child to help with the laundry so that he can get his space world organized properly?



Bedtime Hassle

Between ages 2½ and 3½, bedtime can be a real hassle. Growing Child is capable of an assortment of schemes to keep you in demand—a drink, a kiss, a story, the toilet. And in fact she may be so cute and cunning it is hard to resist the ruse!

However, once bedtime rituals are finished, it is well to avoid trouble by maintaining a consistent pattern—it's "good night" once they are in bed.

It's true that many youngsters won't fall asleep promptly and may talk or play in bed for up to an hour. Others may feel more secure with a nightlight in the room. And these exceptions are fine. It is the children who demand your presence, and get it, who are damaging their relationship with their parents. Many tired parents respond to post-bedtime strategies by shouting and spanking. Alas, they

have given their attention which is after all what the child wanted!

When a child appears in the living room or kitchen after being put to bed, the best policy is to take the hand and silently and unemotionally escort her back to her room.

Obviously a sick child needs special consideration. It may be necessary to remain in the darkened room until she falls asleep as a symbol of comfort.



A Game To Play

Here's a game you can play with Youngster called "The Silence Game". Ask Youngster to close her eyes and guess what sound you will make. Some examples of sounds—striking a fork against a glass, scratching a fingernail file, or any other familiar experience that has an interesting sound.

A variation of this game is the whisper. Tell Youngster to listen as hard as possible because you are going to whisper something very, very quietly. She is to see if she can hear it! Then you whisper a very simple command for her to follow, such as "open the door", or "get me a Kleenex." End the game with a treat—"Listen very carefully", then whisper, "There's a surprise for you, look in my hand!"

The silence game is more than a game. It trains children to be quiet and to listen. It is a fun way for parents to help children calm down. Parents have been known to use the silence game as a means of bringing unwilling children indoors or to the dinner table.



Your Self-Confidence As A Parent

About this time you may begin to question your self-confidence as a parent. Rather than running to "Dr. Spock" or other child-rearing manuals, you must be able to act decisively and

confidently. The influence of neighbors and relatives and what they will think can be very unsettling to you.

However, most decisions revolve around two child behaviors, Needs and Wants, which are most important for you to differentiate.

Needs must be responded to in the interest of Youngster's development. Wants may be considered but they may also be rejected in the interest of health, safety or family priorities. Parents who feel obliged to satisfy all the Wants may discover that they are harboring a little tyrant or a mini junior executive. Many parents are afraid of losing their child's love if they deny him all he wants—children do become easily frustrated and often very angry when thwarted. Yet it is impossible to satisfy 100% without parents becoming irritated and indignant.

A compromise is, first, to recognize the difference between Needs and Wants. Then if you can feel secure in your love for your child, you can accept the consequences of your decisions—without fearing your child's rejection or your neighbor's or relatives' criticisms.



Hospitals & Kids

A child has his own ideas about hospitals and about what happens inside them. Some of his ideas are fears, some fantasies. You can't just take your child to the hospital for tests or X-rays or a tonsillectomy—you can't take him for something that's going to be done to him—without telling him that he is going to the hospital, without explaining what will happen to him there. He's a person. He has a right to know if he has to go to the hospital. And he'll handle the whole experience much better if he's ready for it.

There are a few hospitals with programs to help children get used to the hospital environment.

But the most crucial thing to a child's dealing with his hospital stay is the way his parents have prepared him.

If your child does have to go to the hospital, tell him so. He needs time to get used to the idea. Explain to him why he has to go, in language he can understand. Describe what the routine will be, everything from having to wear a hospital gown and have blood and urine tests, to what will go on in the operating room while he's still awake and when he's asleep—ask the doctor first, to be sure you're not leaving anything out. (Use your own judgement about how much detail—be realistic about how much your child can handle.) Let your child know that you will be there to visit him, that you'll stay as long as you can. Tell him you'll have to go home at night time, that you'll be back, that when he is finished (or "better") he will come home. And don't forget that some things might happen to him that will hurt—and tell him it's okay to cry.



On Teaching the Very Young to Swim

Much is now being written about teaching the infant and the toddler to swim. In some cases there almost seems to be a contest to see who can have the youngest infant in the pool to be photographed "swimming."

Such "swimming" can be taught to very young children but it requires a great deal of time and effort that might better be spent on experiences more enjoyable to the child and you.

Most early-swimming teaching techniques are frightening to the youngster under age 3½ or 4. They usually require the child to place his face in the water, and although this may be done gently, it is an abnormal, frightening act for many children and results in choking and gasping episodes. Too many of these bad experiences may lead to a long-lasting fear of the water.

Assuming the youngster does learn to swim—will it add to his and your enjoyment and safety around water? No!

In fact, it may increase the danger if you assume that he knows how to swim and therefore does not need close watching when around water. He may well have mastered the mechanics of swimming but still lacks the judgment and experience to react correctly if he slips or is accidentally pushed into deep water.

So, by all means teach your child to enjoy the water by allowing him to splash in the tub or at the pool's edge. Let him get "wet all over" while in your arms in a pool. But don't be too eager to teach him to swim. Wait until he is old enough to learn it easily and mature enough to enjoy it safely. That may be at age four or five.



Dear Growing Child

"I'm a full-time working mother of a 21 month and 10 month old boys . . .

As new parents we look forward to the new issues we are to receive, and backwards to the old issues for the news on our second child.

We've gotten lots of valuable things from you and many things we would never have thought of ourselves.

Please keep up the good work. You're certainly worth your weight in GOLD."

*Mrs. M.H.
Wapakoneta, OH*



Next Month

- Night Dryness
- Thumbsuckers
- Time Patterns & the World of Time

Growing Child®

4/87

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Growing Child®

2 Years
10 Months

Kinds of Observation

In an article in month 12 titled, "More Careful Observation", we noted that there is a change between the 6th and 12th month in the way Baby acts toward a new but simple object. When Baby is younger he grabs impulsively for the object as soon as he sees it, but at the older age he takes just a moment to look at the object before reaching for it. This is a first step toward the skill of observing things, a skill that takes on increased importance as a child grows older.

Some recent research suggests that there are about four different levels that observation can take. The level that a child uses depends both upon his age and upon what he is supposed to observe. We can use a simple puzzle to illustrate these levels.

The lowest level of observation is simply a lack of attention to the task. In the case of the puzzle, Youngster might be uninterested in the puzzle or bored with it. Or he might ask someone questions about it without really looking at it or try to force the pieces in without looking at them. Simple attention is important to think about because it is a very real factor in learning and problem solving. Learning can't take place if a person fails to notice something. A lack of attention often crops up in the form of daydreaming or being distracted. Many learning disabled children in school show great difficulty keeping their attention on a task long enough to finish it. Most of us have had the experience of reading a sentence or paragraph and afterwards not having the slightest idea of what we had

read. We looked at the words but did not really attend to them.

The second level is where Youngster attends to the task but focuses his attention upon it so closely that he misses other things that might help him out. With the puzzle, he may pick up one likely looking piece and try to make it fit, pushing on it repeatedly. He fails to notice, at least for awhile, another possible piece or another hole in which the first one might fit. Another example would be a child who continues to stretch and jump in an effort to grasp something that is just out of reach, rather than look for another means of reaching the goal, like a chair to stand on. A child or adult can often fall into this pattern when he confronts a task that is too hard. When two or three different actions don't work, frustration may cause one to narrow down and try the same thing over and over for awhile. This strange and unproductive behavior even happens in animals under frustrating conditions.

An expectation as to how to solve the problem can also cause someone to be less observant about other possible solutions. If, for instance, Youngster is used to simple puzzle pieces, his first experiences with a more complicated puzzle may fall far short of quick success. If the earlier puzzle had perfectly round forms, he will expect a round piece to fit in a round hole. But if the new puzzle has pieces that are not perfectly round, he may still expect a roundish piece to fit into a roundish hole. This will lead him to keep trying a piece or force it when it really doesn't

fit. It would take several days of experience with the new puzzle before his old expectation is changed to allow for the new situation. (This process of making changes in ideas was described in month 13, "Problems for Little Minds"). But to begin with, he will not be attentive to all the possible pieces that might make a fit.

At the third level of observation, Youngster tunes in to the goal but also recognizes other things that may be of help. With the puzzle, if one piece does not work, he will immediately try another piece. If he cannot reach an object, he will quickly look for something to help, like a stick or a chair (or Mother). The key to attaining this level is breaking away from a fixation on the goal and on one method of reaching the goal, long enough to try something else. The new things may not work, but Youngster actively experiments with them. He uses trial and error with many things to find the solution. As we have seen, however, this is not always as easy as it sounds.

The third level we just described could be called a visual-motor level of problem solving. But the fourth and highest level of observation is purely visual. Here, several possible solutions are observed and thought about. Then the most likely method is chosen. Youngster doesn't do many things at this level yet. But if he were at level four with the puzzle, he would look at several likely pieces before choosing one to try in a hole.

"That's not my Youngster", you say, and we agree. Youngster-approaching-three is still apt to do something first and think

about it later. This impulsiveness is quite normal, and we shouldn't be too impatient with it. It is Nature's way of giving him the most experiences in the shortest possible time.

It is possible, though, to see the beginnings of higher kinds of observation in Youngster. These can be seen in simple activities or ones he is very familiar with. Take eating for instance. Youngster has learned that his different foods make for several possible solutions to his pressing problem of hunger. But he doesn't just plunge into the closest dish or the first one he sees. He eyes all the offerings, perhaps warily. He knows from experience that some foods are more satisfactory (to him) than others. Given a choice, he will probably start with the most likely solution, that is, the food he likes the best.



For another example, think of the simplest and most familiar toy that Youngster plays with, one that has objects for him to place or manipulate. If you watch him, you will notice that he gives more than passing notice to the objects among which he must choose. Then he will select the best block to go into the hole, or whatever the task may be. But with a new toy, Youngster will operate at level two or three, depending on how familiar he is with similar kinds of toys. He will demonstrate level one if you give him a game that is far too hard, like a game of checkers. He will not pay any attention to it as a game of checkers, but he may convert it to another game at his own level, like stacking

the checkers. Then he would operate with them at level two or three.

Observation and Toys

You can see that thinking about the level of observation Youngster uses with toys can serve as a guide to choosing new toys for your particular Youngster. Generally you should aim for a toy at level three, where Youngster can learn by trial and error, without the narrowness of behavior that can result from frustration. If level two is a result of previous expectations, it should last only a few days, while Youngster learns to make variations on the older theme. Usually Youngster will not outgrow a toy until he has consistently achieved level four with it. Thus his earlier fascination with pull toys begins to fade as he learns consistently to pull it around without bumping into any walls or furniture.

There is an important reason why Youngster works toward level four and why you, as a parent, might gently encourage this progress. We said that level four is purely visual and does not require any movement from Youngster as he thinks about the situation. It is this careful reflective "inside" thinking that is needed for him to solve the verbal problems that he will get in increasing amounts as he grows older. In month 37 we will explain this in a little more detail, and talk about a few ways of encouraging Youngster's progress toward level four and the world of verbal thought.



Teasing

Parents frequently ask how to help their children combat teasing from peers or older youngsters. Psychologists tell us that children who engage in the cruel kind of teasing (we are uncertain that it differs substantially from the "friendly" kind) usually come from homes where

sarcasm and hostility—fashioned in joke form—are abundant. Most parents are able to control their irritations and do not physically hurt children, yet some parents do not stop to consider that regular teasing, though indirect and imaginative, is a similar type of punishment. While the parent cannot be accused of wrongdoing, the effect is essentially the same.

Then there is the gentle teasing which is well-intentioned. Nevertheless, three year olds do not have thick skins nor the sophistication to laugh at themselves nor see others enjoy themselves at their expense. Further, the three year old doesn't have the vocabulary or speech fluency to talk back. But his sensitivity to verbal abuses increases. Dr. Benjamin Spock says that when a child is constantly mean "...it is usually apparent that he has been regularly taking meanness from someone else in the family." "All of the children I have observed engaging in a kind of sadistic teasing have been teased that same way by an older brother, a father, an uncle," although he admits that the male sex has no monopoly.

So what can parents do to discourage the teasers and bullies outdoors? With young children, a parent's presence helps keep older children in line. Then when trouble appears to be developing, the parent may redirect the play or introduce a new activity, both distractions. Children take their cues from parents' behavior. If parents do not appear to be upset themselves, the children will remain calm. However, if indignant parents, in front of Youngster, retell teasing or bullying experiences, these experiences become magnified in the child's mind and tend to reinforce his timidity and fearful feelings. Also, when parents intervene and "rescue" their children too soon and too often, they teach children that their only defense is their parent's presence. This

Play Things



2 years 10 months

Learning through "doing."

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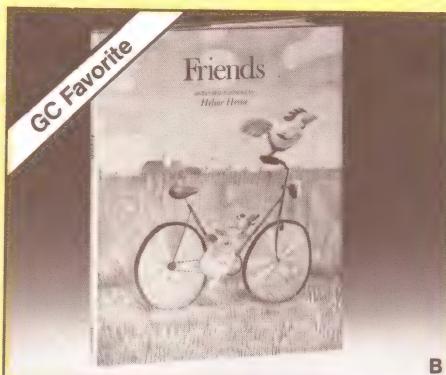
Think of all the things your child can do *now* that she wasn't able to do a year ago: she's more sociable; she knows some of the differences in sizes, colors, and shapes; she's developed the muscles and coordination needed to run and climb well; the list goes on and on. At this formative age, your child is expanding her physical skills, language ability, and a sense of individuality.

Growing Child playthings help contribute to these areas of growth by complementing your child's developing skills. Equally important, they require your child's active participation because two- and three-year-olds learn by *doing*. Our toys do nothing by themselves—it takes your child's imagination and action to bring them to life. These are the kinds of playthings that help encourage your child to become a participant in life, rather than a spectator.



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A Bear and Rabbit Hand Puppets

Children have always loved puppets, and for good reason.

Puppets allow your youngster to become actively involved; he's responsible for initiating what goes on—he brings the puppet to life by inventing the words, actions, and "thoughts." Creating and doing this "all by myself" makes your child feel good about himself and his accomplishments and is an excellent way for Youngster to develop creativity while building a positive self-esteem.

These soft playmates are made of superior quality materials—two of the finest puppets you could find for your child.

Surface washable plush. 3 yrs. and up.

RMN23 Bear (10" tall) \$8.50
RMN24 Rabbit (12" tall) \$8.50
RMN25 Set of both \$16.00

B Friends, by Helme Heine.

"Good friends always stick together." That's what Charlie Rooster, Johnny Mouse, and Percy Pig always said—and that's what they did all day long!

This joyful book is a celebration of friendship. Its lovely, fresh illustrations are filled with childlike humor and an irresistible sense of happy sharing that will captivate young and old. This is a treasure not to be missed.

Your child will see the rewards that come from getting along with others. This book was especially appealing to us at Growing Child, because the three characters are different in their looks, talents, and backgrounds, yet they're all the best of friends!

Hardbound, 8½" X 11", full color, 30 pp.

3-6 yrs.

RM362 \$13.00

C Animal Floor Puzzle

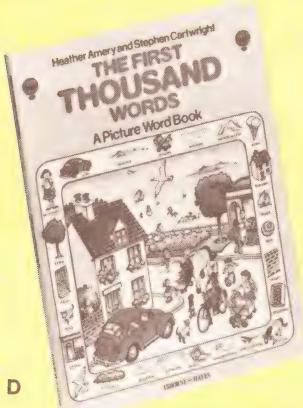
This big, bright colorful plaything will be a special challenge to your child, because it's a puzzle-within-a-puzzle. The 12 easy-to-hold pieces all fit together into one giant 18" X 24" floor puzzle.

In addition, there's another set of shapes of familiar objects that fit into the larger pieces.

There's so much skill-building involved here. Your child will start at a trial and error stage—then with practice, he'll eventually "memorize" the puzzle and want to show you how fast he can assemble it.

Pieces are approximately 6" square. 3-6 yrs.
RMN16 \$8.50

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D

D **The First Thousand Words**, by Heather Amery and Stephen Cartwright. This combination picture book, word book, and dictionary provides a fascinating learning experience for your child.

Each page illustrates a familiar setting in colorful detail—a hospital, kitchen, farm. There are also pictures and words for colors, pets, opposites, and more.

An excellent resource book for the very young that strengthens your child's awareness of associations, meanings, and words.

Hardbound, 9 1/4" X 12 1/4", full color, 63 pp. 3 yrs. and up.

RM283 \$11.00

E **Stack-a-Ball**

Fifteen wooden balls in five different colors fit onto pegs of graduated lengths. As Youngster plays with the different color arrangements, she'll discover how to stack the balls correctly in order to match the colors.

In doing this, she gains important mathematical concepts. For example: (1) "More" is represented by either a larger quantity (5 balls) or by a longer length (the tallest peg). (2) Through actual manipulation of the balls and pegs, she'll know more than how to recite "1,2,3,4,5"; she'll understand the meaning of each number's quantity.

As an added bonus, we've included a sturdy lace for stringing the beads—an important dexterity skill for this age.

Wood base, 9 1/2" long. 3-6 yrs.

RMO11 \$13.50

F **Cat, Hat, and Kittens**

Each one of these crazy, colorful puzzles stimulates your child's visual and perceptual skills.

The cat puzzle helps your child understand the relationship between the *individual* parts and the *whole* cat. The funny hats puzzle reinforces shape differences, and there's

something hiding in the clever kittens puzzle that matches the background.

Your child will love the uniqueness of these three imaginative puzzles, and you'll love the value.

A Growing Child exclusive.

Each puzzle, 7" X 9" inlaid board. 2 1/2-4 yrs.

RML5 \$3.00

G **Getting to Know Myself**, by Hap Palmer.

Your child can put all of her energy to good use dancing and playing along with the songs on this unique activity album.

Early childhood teachers and music teachers acclaim Hap Palmer records because they help children learn concepts while encouraging physical and emotional confidence. This unique album leads your child through physical movements to discover all the many things that bodies can do. Youngster will have great fun while learning physical skills, as well as how to listen carefully and follow spoken directions.

12 songs. 2-8 yrs.

RMJ9 LP \$11.00

RMJ13 Cassette \$11.00

H **Sculpt and Squeeze**

This plaything is what parents and children wish for in a toy. You'll like this because it's safe and washable. Youngster is attracted to the colors, uniqueness, texture and shapes. You'll both love the challenge and versatility—the possibilities for play are endless.

The 32 big, soft, foam pieces reinforce colors and shapes and build your child's creativity as she makes constructions and puzzles.

Youngster will get even more ideas for fun and play with the accompanying 16 page activity book.

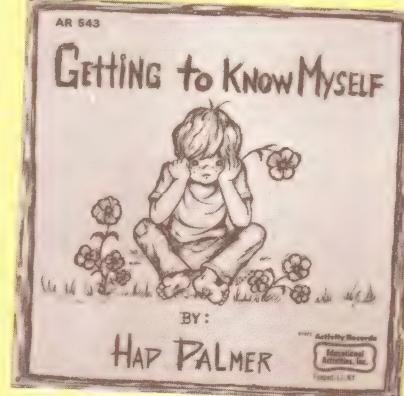
The strong, handy carrying case makes it easy to store and transport.

Largest piece is 11" X 18". 3-10 yrs.

RMN17 \$21.00



H



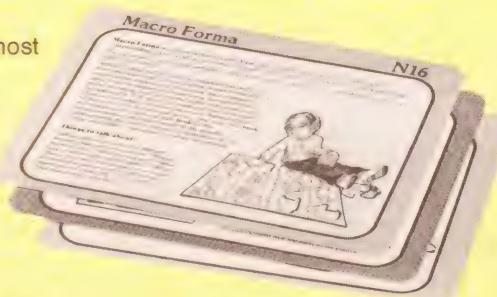
G



F

Toy Cards

A special bonus you'll receive with most Growing Child toys is our exclusive **Toy Card**. These cards help you get maximum play value from every purchase by suggesting games, new uses, and adaptations to hold a child's interest longer and stretch your toy dollar further.



Our Guarantee

Our Guarantee is simple! We promise 100% satisfaction or your money back, anytime, for any reason. We want you to be completely satisfied with everything you get from Growing Child. **All Growing Child Playthings are sturdy, safe, and non-toxic.**

certainly does not help a child build self-confidence. Parents of timid children report that they cannot convince them to fight back, even when the bully or teaser is smaller.



So, what can parents do to help their children combat teasing and the effects of teasing? (1) Eliminate teasing from your own behavior. (2) Be present, unobtrusively, when children play outdoors with Youngster. (3) Don't teach Youngster that it is wrong to fight. (4) Keep cool and don't become agitated when you hear stories about how your child was tormented. Listen to your child's story, comfort him for a minute and send him off to do something else. (5) Avoid discussing the episode in Youngster's presence. (6) Don't consider moving from the neighborhood. Every street has its bully.



A Tricycle Is a Space-Time Machine

If you have not bought your growing child a tricycle yet, we think it's time you did. A tricycle is an excellent tool for good development, and we think **every child should have one.**

What type tricycle should you buy? We really like the old-fashioned type best. If you are not tricycle experts, let us explain. The old-fashioned tricycle is the one where the child sits erect as he operates this marvelous machine. The newer type tricycle is the one where he leans backward while he pedals.

The reason we prefer this type is because it lets him have a clear and unobstructed view of where he's going in space. We think this is very important because in this manner an old-fashioned tricycle helps him get his eyes matched up with what his body is doing.

A tricycle also helps your growing child develop some very important skills. As he pedals his tricycle he learns how to shift from his left side to his right side. He pushes with first one foot and then with the other foot. In this way he learns that he has two different sides. Here's why this type learning is so important:

As teachers and consultants, we see many kids who are very intelligent. The problem is that their reading ability is much lower than their intellectual ability. When we see a kid like this we usually find that he has not sorted out his right and left sides. He tends not to have a good awareness of left as different from right within his own body. When we ask a kid like this to read, we find that he typically reverses letters like "b" and "d" and words like "was" and "saw". Now reversals like this are really reversals in space. The only difference between "b" and "d" is the basic difference between "left" and "right". The same is true of the difference between "was" and "saw". So if a child has problems with "b" and "d" and "was" and "saw", he is really having problems in organizing the left-right dimension in space.

In order to organize directions in space out there, the child must first organize the space within his own body. This is to say that he must first feel the difference between "left" and "right", the difference between "up" and "down" within his own body. Once he feels these differences "inside himself", he has learned the starting point for organizing the space which is in the world "out there".

A tricycle can be a powerful developmental tool in helping your child sort out his left and right sides. As strange as it sounds, this means that the tricycle can help him learn to read later. As he learns to ride his tricycle he learns to push with the left foot and then with the right foot. In this way he learns that right is different from left, and he learns to sort out the two sides of his body.

But the tricycle also helps him learn about time. If he learns to ride the tricycle well, he also learns that he must shift from side-to-side at the proper time. He cannot shift at just any old time. He must make the shift at precisely the right time.

Time is also very important in school learning. If he learns to spell efficiently he must learn to get the letters in a word in the proper time order. We see many children who spell "first" as "frist" and "girl" as "gril". These errors are examples of general problems in organizing time. So, if he learns to ride his trike smoothly, rhythmically, and efficiently, he is also learning to organize his movements in time. This basic learning should help him very much with later school learning.

So, our advice is simply this: Get him an old-fashioned tricycle and help him learn to ride it. In this way you'll get him ready for reading and spelling later on.

Don't be tempted to economize by buying a tricycle "just a little too big" so your child can "grow into it." He will feel more secure if it is just the right size for his feet to reach the pedals comfortably without the need to add blocks of wood to them. A good general guide is that if a child's inside leg measurement is between 17" and 20" his tricycle front wheel should have a diameter of 12" or 13". A shorter child may need a 10" front wheel.

Choose a tricycle with a squat look, that is, a wide wheel base in proportion to its height. Such

a tricycle is less likely to tip over when your child turns sharp corners.

It is important also that you teach him to ride his tricycle in the right way. In general, the



right way is simply to put him on it, put his feet on the pedals and then let him go. If he does not get the idea immediately, you may push him at first. When you push him, try to see that his feet are on the pedals so that he feels his feet moving as the tricycle moves. Do not try to teach him the names of his feet at this stage. Do not talk about his "left foot" and his "right foot". Learning the names of his body sides can come much later. What we are trying to teach now is the feel of left and the feel of right, and how right and left can work together. If he learns this, he will be learning how space and time go together.



Things To Do At Home Language Learning and Fine Motor Development

1. The Scientist. When you defrost the refrigerator, put the ice cubes into a large low plastic bowl. With and without gloves Youngster can investigate the temperature, shapes of the cubes, their change over time. Meanwhile you can introduce the significant words, "freezing", "melting", "cold", "icy", and "liquid". Since children of this age lose interest, provide a small plastic pitcher filled with water and allow them to refill the ice

cube container which can then be returned to the refrigerator to make more ice cubes.

2. The Sculptor. Junk modeling is wonderful and collecting junk is fun. With an abundant supply of junk, strong glue and paper, almost any frivolity can be created. Right now you and Youngster's grandparents start collecting junk—paper towel rollers, reels from sticky tape, spools from thread, scraps of material, gift wrap and kitchen foil, paper sacks, ribbons, elastic, candy wrappers, teabag envelopes, shells, pebbles, small match boxes, etc. As Youngster sorts and assembles the junk, ask "where do you think this came from?" Questions like this encourage children to organize their ideas and to think creatively. Obviously they will offer many incorrect and absurd answers. But here's your chance to provide new information without discrediting what's been said. "Well, that's interesting. You want to know something else?" Here's an opportunity to talk about ecology and the fact that by collecting junk you are both helping to reuse waste rather than discard it.

3. The Artist. At age three, Youngster can make a crude drawing of a man. He prefers to use only two colors, usually yellow and red. However, you can make the artist more versatile by transferring his talent to the blackboard. (Make your own blackboard by painting a piece of pressed wood with 2-3 coats of chalkboard paint. If the pressed wood measures at least 18" x 24", it will also be able to serve as a painting easel when a large pad of newsprint is clipped to it.) Now the area is large and offers multiple opportunities.

As Youngster draws, you can talk about the shapes he makes—"circle", "cross", "square", etc. Little children like new and big words, so don't feel you have to confine the vocabulary to "round" for circle or "box" for square.



Dear Growing Child

"We think your newsletter is terrific, it's so helpful and informative. I love your suggestions for games and activities..."

"I am a Special Education teacher for Learning Disabled or mildly retarded children in grades 1-6. So many of the ideas you give would have been useful for these children when they were small. Your ideas on language, listening... and learning would have helped some of these children avoid their reading and math problems."

Jan G.
Omaha, NE



Next Month

- Growing in Understanding
- Fibs and Obscenities
- Take a Walk
- A Start on Telling Time

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5/87

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2 Years
11 Months

Growing in Understanding

Growing Child is in a Golden Age—her relationship with you and herself will continue to be relaxed for the next thirteen months. When confusions or misunderstandings do occur, they are likely to be connected with the child's ability to use language and handle abstract ideas.

It may be necessary for you to play detective in order to discover the reasons for Youngster's actions. For example, Mary wants you to help her make a flower out of clay, and you do your best. The episode ends in tears, however, because of the confusion over the specific meaning of "flower". Mary is thinking of a flower like the one in the plastic pot in the kitchen. Or John wants to ride along in the car when his sister goes to school. Dad explains that it's not their turn today; they belong in a car pool and their turn is tomorrow. The next day John wants his swimsuit. When asked why, he replies, "You promised we were going in a pool." Or take Sally's concept of God. At the dinner table she tells her parents that her playschool teacher is God. They try to explain that this just isn't so. But Sally insists: "Yes, she is God. She brings us crackers and juice and then we say, 'Thank you, God, for the crackers and juice.'" When Bill returns from a birthday party, he is shattered. What has happened? The harassed hostess seated him at the table and said, "Sit there for the present." But nothing happened—"She didn't give me a present."

Some of the funny expressions are Youngster's efforts to organize her impressions: Salt on a

pretzel is called "pimples"; the shot from the doctor is labelled a "pinch".

Children try to use the information they have in order to solve their problems. And each problem-solving effort is a learning experience even if they make numerous errors in the process. For example, Alice wants to look at the guest's pocketbook. She asks, "May I have that?" The guest asks, "What do you want? Show me." Alice replies, "I can't. It's not nice to point."

It is often difficult to follow a child's thinking. George inquires, "Mommy, why doesn't Daddy like pizza?" Mother responds with the question, "Why do you say that Daddy doesn't like pizza?" After which George replies, "Daddy isn't home, he comes home late when we eat pizza." It happens that on Friday evenings when George's father works the late shift, the family eats pizza.

In spite of the faulty reasoning, these experiences indicate that children are making associations, and attempting to form conclusions.



Twins

Parents of twins are supposed to face twice as many child-rearing problems (and also twice as much fun). We know of two concerns. (1) Sibling rivalry, not uncommon among children anyway, is often strongly felt from the non-twin brother or sister. It is so hard for them to compete with two who are attractive, identical, cute, dressed alike and fussed over. (2) Parents display concern because twins are somewhat delayed in speech which usually starts about 18 months, although the Dionne

quintuplets didn't use words until they were 22 months old.

Twins make more use of gesture and mime to communicate, and they often have a special jargon or secret language which is unintelligible except to their co-twin. Generally the language delay persists through the preschool years. Research suggests that during this period twins have smaller vocabularies, use shorter sentences and less sophisticated grammar.



In a study of the language of identical and fraternal four year old twins, it was found that they were about 6 months behind schedule. There was no characteristic pattern—just an overall immaturity. On the other hand, on non-verbal tests, the twins produced at-age scores.

It is the feeling of experts that in twin and multiple births, there is less parent-child interaction than in single births. But at the same time, the twins or triplets receive more verbal stimulation from those of their own age than singletons.



A Start on Telling Time

A famous educational psychologist, Jerome Bruner, believes that a preschool child can be given a start toward learning almost anything, as long as the material is presented at the

child's own level. This does not mean that even simple words or simple arithmetic problems can be learned at this age. What he means is that every task is made up of a number of simpler tasks, which in turn are composed of still simpler tasks, and so on. A child can be given a large head start on the future, feels Bruner, if he is allowed to experience those tasks that he is capable of doing at his particular stage of development. That way he won't have to spend time later learning the subskills that he could have learned earlier. The trick, of course, is to break a higher activity down into its simpler parts, let the child do the parts that he is capable of doing, and help him with the parts that he cannot do. It was this idea that we used in the month 14 article, "Dressing As Partnership", where Toddler was encouraged to make the simple movements that he could make, with parent directing the movements in the right order and continuing any movements where Toddler had to leave off. Many other articles also have emphasized this theme of task analysis and partnership.

Another example of getting a headstart on a useful future skill is the matter of telling time. Recently we have talked about Youngster's developing sense of past, present and future, and suggested a way of fostering his appreciation of time by calling his attention to the order in which different events occur. The importance of consistency and predictability of his regular daily events was emphasized.

As Youngster's awareness of time grows, time words like "when" appear in his vocabulary, often in the form of questions. Thus he will begin to ask, "When are we going to eat?", or, "When can I play with Ricky?" The usual answer to this kind of question is "pretty soon", to indicate a short time, or "after we eat" to provide an event as a marker for a longer period of time. Youngster can soon learn the meaning of such answers. But

in keeping with Bruner's idea of introducing an important skill simply and early, there is another answer to Youngster's "when" questions that you can use part of the time.



When Youngster is hungry in the evening and impatient with the speed of the dinner preparations, point to the large hand of the clock and say to him, "We will have dinner when this big hand gets to the bottom (or the top) of the clock." Point to where the hand will be as you say this. Then make every effort to meet that prediction accurately. If he is not familiar with the clock, you will have to explain that the hand does move, but too slowly for him to see it. Don't try to teach him hours and minutes. This is difficult even for some first graders to understand, though by Kindergarten many will understand the concept of hours.

If Youngster asks you what the little hand is for, just tell him that it moves even more slowly than the big hand and he doesn't have to watch it. We suggest you use only the hour and half hour positions of the minute hand, for Youngster is familiar with top and bottom but will have trouble with the side positions like three and nine o'clock. Of course, for this method to work, you will have to be no more than an hour away from the predicted event, but that is the longest time Youngster can be expected to check the clock's progress toward a single goal anyway.

You can also use these clock

positions for other important happenings, like leaving the house to begin a trip, or to show when Mother or Daddy is coming home (if that is predictable). In the same way, the clock can be used to signal the approach of bedtime. This takes away much of the arbitrariness that Youngster may suspect on your part when you suddenly make the announcement that puts an end to his late evening activities. He still may not have kind words for your information, but by directing his attention toward this future event, as indicated by the clock, you set up within him an expectation about the future and give him the means of measuring his movement toward this future event. Then when bedtime has arrived it will seem less abrupt to him and he will feel better about making the change. Importantly, he will be learning, at his level, the practical activity of telling time.



Improving Listening Skills

In our month 30 article, "Toward Finer Concentration", we noted that the necessity of feeling several objects, one at a time, encouraged better concentration and longer attention span than simply looking at several objects all at once. This principle of considering several things in a row can be used in building listening skills. Here are two games that use the principle.

1. This is an oldie but goodie: Pick an object in the room that is easily visible from where you and Youngster are sitting. Then describe several of its attributes and see if Youngster can guess what it is. Thus for a chair you might say, "I can see something that is made of wood and has a back and four legs. What is it?" Or for scissors, perhaps, "I can see something that is small and shiny and made of metal, and you use it with paper." Be careful about how you use action words like "you sit on it" or

"you can cut with it", for they may give so big a hint that they detract from the other clues, unless other objects in the room can have the same action. The idea is to have Youngster listen to all the clues, remember them and try to put them together. Of course Youngster should get his turn to describe something if he has successfully identified your object. Naturally his descriptions are apt to be ambiguous and heavily loaded with size and color words ("it is big and red.") But if you choose the "wrong" object that still matches his description, that is part of the educational value of the game, for it shows him that he must be more exact and use words that uniquely describe the object. This game is really a variation of the "I'm thinking of" game that uses unseen objects. However, unseen objects will be far too difficult for Youngster at this stage.

2. "Which One Sounds Like Mine?" Save four cereal boxes, the kind whose tops can be closed securely. Then select as many pairs of small objects as you can find, small enough to fit into the boxes. Place one of a pair in "your" box, and one in a box that you will place in front of Youngster. Place a different object in each of two more



boxes and give them to Youngster, too. Then have him shake your box and listen to the sound of the object rattling inside it. After that he should shake each of "his" boxes in turn, to try to find the box containing the same object as the one in your box.

Usually each object will have its own unique rattle or thud, and the only problem will be in getting objects that weigh about the same to eliminate weight clues. You can change the object in your box three times before having to change Youngster's. As in the first game, Youngster must pay close attention and consider several things over a period of time. So concentration is aided as well as listening skills.

Another useful principle in encouraging careful listening—and concentration in general—is to reduce the intensity of the stimulus. You can do this with the Whisper Game. Place in front of Youngster four or five objects whose names he knows. Then sit behind Youngster and whisper, ever so quietly, the name of one of them. Ask him to tell you which one you named. Here you can easily vary the difficulty of the game according to the loudness of your whisper and the amount of background noise present. Youngster will be very anxious to whisper to you, too, and that is something he doesn't get much practice in doing during the course of his everyday play!

Intensity is easier to control in hearing activities than in vision and touch games, and is most relevant in hearing as a skill.

There are yet other principles for encouraging finer perception and concentration. One is closure, in which the quality or recognizability of a stimulus is reduced. Sounds important, doesn't it? But we'll have more to say about these principles in the future.



How To Teach Opposites

Make your own picture-story book by clipping from magazines, catalogs and newspapers those pictures which will help teach the following concepts:

1. "Big"/"little". An elephant and a mouse. You can even make a rhyme about the elephant as big as a house and the little

gray mouse.

2. "Indoors"/"outdoors". A picture of children eating at the kitchen table, and another where they are picnicking on the grass.

3. "Wet"/"dry". A picture of a child with raincoat, boots and umbrella walking through a puddle



and another of a youngster watching from a window indoors.

4. "Fast"/"slow". A picture of someone riding a motorcycle and another of someone pushing a baby buggy.

5. "Hard"/"soft". A picture of two children falling; one on the pavement, the other on the carpet or grass.



How To Teach Associations

Make a deck of picture cards—animals, people, objects of transportation, foods, etc. Start out by placing three cards in front of Youngster and yourself. Now ask the leading questions. Some examples:

- "Which one says meow?"
- "Which one flies in the air?"
- "Which one feels cold?"
- "Which one wears trousers?"
- "Which one tastes sweet?"

You start by making a selection—"Here's one that says meow. It's a cat!" Put the card down, and allow Youngster a turn. Should a wrong choice be made, point out something specific about that card rather than commenting only about the wrong choice. With experience Youngster will probably want to ask the questions for you to answer.

Take a Walk

While the mature mind may deal in abstract thought, most learning is based upon perceptual-motor experiences, particularly for the young child. Once children enter school, there is a tendency for the education to make them spectators and listeners rather than doers. Therefore, it is especially important for children to gather a sufficiency of experiences before entering school. For example, when you take Youngster for a walk, make it a "curiosity walk".



Help to casually explore with the senses of touch, smell, hearing and vision. In the woods or in the park, stop to examine a rock, plant or tree. Such questions as "What does it feel like?", "How does it smell?", "Can it make a sound?", "Do you know something it looks like?" will provoke Youngster's interest and allow you to supply new and descriptive words such as "mushy", "squeaky", "lumpy", "bumpy", "squishy", "enormous", etc.

Unless you follow Youngster's initiative, there won't be much pay-off. Therefore, select a time when you aren't busy or in a hurry to get somewhere. Relax and permit yourself to be led. Walking has other values, particularly in the natural setting, outdoors. It is an excellent way to offer exercises in balance. Try to incorporate a variety of walks—climbing up and down hills or uneven terrain; following lines or cracks in the side-

walk or pavement; hiking through fields of leaves, snow and mud (properly clothed, of course.) In the summer walk in sand, water and high grass.

Jumping is fun, and becoming airborne frees the body in space. A simple and inexpensive toy which is also enduring can be home-made. With either a tractor tire or tractor innertube (the innertube is better for lightweights) place a piece of canvas across the top and lace it tightly with elastic cord. This type of trampoline has versatility—sit and bounce, hop around the edge on knees, stand and jump. It may be necessary to offer a hand at first, and it is always wise to keep an eye on the gymnast. Place the tramp on a soft surface like grass because spills are unavoidable.

As long as it doesn't rain, an obstacle course can be set up outdoors. Movements "between", "around", "across", "inside of", "under", and "on top of" objects increase the child's awareness of himself—how she can use her body and limbs; where the arms and legs are when she changes positions from stomach to back to side to upright; the



different ways she must use her body in order to succeed; bend, stretch, pull, push, twist, turn, wiggle, creep, shake, squeeze, stoop. How do you make an obstacle course? Any "white elephants", discards or conventional yard equipment will do. The idea is for Youngster to use body and mind to discover how to tackle the obstacles.

For instance, if you have a picnic bench, refrigerator carton (or any other carton) and a



house ladder placed flat on the ground, Youngster can go "under" or "on top of" the picnic bench, "through" a hole in the carton, and "between" the rungs on the ladder.

Body movement songs are a natural sequence to body movement and experimentation in space. They are also useful as a resting activity following vigorous play. Some examples:

1. "I take my little heel and go click, click, click.

I slap my little knees and go smack, smack, smack.

I slide my little feet and go shuff, shuff, shuff.

I take my little tongue and go click, click, click."

2. "Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes;

Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes;

Chin and mouth and cheeks and nose;

Chin and mouth and cheeks and nose, cheeks and nose."

(Tune: "There Is a Tavern in the Town")



A Story About An Interesting Child

John Tracy, son of the movie actor, Spencer Tracy, was a child with a serious handicap. Mrs. Tracy went from specialist to specialist in search of some expert who could tell her about the exact nature of John's problem and what to do about it. Finally she found one expert who examined John and identified his

specific problems.

Here at last was someone who finally found out just what was wrong with John and who zeroed in on his particular problem. Now this great man was faced with the problem of telling John's mother about John's particular handicap. When he met with Mrs. Tracy, his first words were these: "Mrs. Tracy, you are going to lead a very interesting life." Then he told her all about John's problem, and what she should do about it. Mrs. Tracy listened and then did everything the great man recommended. As a result, John Tracy is performing at higher levels today.

Just recently I saw a child who had problems in development which were just as serious as those of John Tracy, although they were different. The child I saw was subject to seizures, some of which lasted as long as four hours, and which required mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to keep him alive. And yet here was a child who was still trying.

This particular child was extremely lucky because he had a mother who expected him to do all those things he was capable of doing. In fact, she insisted that he do those things he could do. For example, the mother noted that he still was creeping on all fours at about age two, so she decided it was time for him to walk. So she did the following most unusual thing:

One day there was a big rain and outside the house the grass was really wet. So this mother took her son outside and put him on the wet grass. The child did not like having his knees and hands wet, so he stood up. From that time he has walked. His walking is still rough and somewhat uncoordinated and we are working to improve his walking ability. But the main point is that here is a mother who helped her child progress from creeping to walking. In our view this is a most important change from one developmental stage (creeping) to a higher developmental stage (walking).

Now let me tell you about another interesting child and his mother. This child was four years old, and still did not talk. In discussing this child with his mother, I asked how he would let her know what he wanted at various times. She said that, for example, when he wanted a coke he would stand at the refrigerator and point to the refrigerator. This was his signal that he wanted a coke.

I immediately pounced upon this description of typical behavior and suggested to the mother that she should never respond to his pointing until he at least made a sound. The idea here is if we can get a child such as this to make sounds on cue we can (hopefully) later get him to make words and perhaps even sentences.

This mother said, "Oh, I've tried this many times, but it just doesn't work." I then asked, "But have you really ever refused to give him a coke until he made a sound?" Her reply was most interesting. She said, "Oh, that would be so cruel if I didn't let him have the coke."

What we have here is two mothers with children who have serious problems in development. The first mother consistently insisted on performance of appropriate developmental tasks. The second mother simply refused to insist upon the same performance of an appropriate developmental task (talking).

The child of the first mother is doing just great. I'm amazed at how many basic developmental tasks he can do. The child of the second mother is not doing nearly so well developmentally. The real difference lies in the way the two mothers expect and demand performance from their children.

We vote unanimously for the first mother. Both mothers state that they love their children very much. We think the first mother is doing the most loving things for her child. We hope you agree.



Fibs and Obscenities

About this time most children tell fibs that are real whoppers! Naturally parents become concerned and wonder what they should or shouldn't do. Before you do anything, we suggest you decide whether the child is creating fantasy, is telling fibs to avoid possible trouble or is simply unable to cope with reality (this latter group being a very small number and one which requires professional help, not punishment.)

Fantasy is going on when Bradley applies colored chalk to his lips and plays "Mother"; when Debbie develops an imaginary playmate, an invisible child or animal. Bradley and Debbie aren't experiencing delusions, they are aware of whom they are. At this age, their intellectual horizons are expanding. As long as you and the children know when it's time to stop, enjoy the tall story and create your own just to see how absurd it may become.

And what about the child who more than occasionally fibs?

First you'd better check yourself out to be certain that your quota of tall tales is low. Next, you must convey the fact that there is a pay-off for being forthright. Demonstrate this immediately by rewarding the child for "fessing up" and sparing the punishment.

Youngster's newest vocabulary may well include a variety of swear words and other obscenities. In spite of your strong desire to put a stop to them, you will not stop them by opposing them. Make it an issue and your child will curse forever, even if he hasn't the vaguest notion of its meaning now. The most successful treatment is to do absolutely nothing; ignore the talk. Very soon the swearer will weary of his explosive language because it fails to stir you up or shock you.



Try Some Ecology— Make Something Grow

Everybody is planting or grow-

ing something these days. Why not Youngster? Such activity will help your child learn new vocabulary, more about time relations, and responsibility. You can teach plant care—how to feel the soil to know if water is necessary; how to decide whether sun or shade is needed. If you select materials which are almost cost-free, there will be an additional reward. Some things to plant:

1. Lemon, grapefruit, or orange seeds. Fill a small pot which has holes in the bottom, with soil. Push seeds into the soil until they are covered with $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of soil. Next water. Finally, wait—it takes a while for the seeds to develop.

2. Grass seed. If you want instant success, sprinkle some seed on a damp sponge!

3. Lima beans. Line a glass jar with moist paper towels. Then place the beans between the towel and the jar to enable you to watch what's happening. Now, cover the jar. Finally, watch and wait for the beans to become plants.

4. Sweet potato and avocado pit. Place toothpicks around the middle of the vegetables in order to hold them up. Place them in a glass jar so that the tip is covered with water. Until the plant has leaves, keep it out of direct sunlight. Continue to add water because the tip must be covered. In about 6 weeks there will be roots. Then you may plant either potato or pit in soil, keeping the top of the plant soil-free. What unique and somewhat funny looking plants they turn out to be!



Birthday, All Day

A birthday is a day when people remember how glad they are that you were born. When it's your birthday, they celebrate the you-ness of you—green and purple icing on the cake, if that's what you want; or Batman decorations, even if they're not

pretty; or your favorite food, even if the neighbor's child had something nicer.

Birthday presents celebrate your specialness. Sitting on the pillow when you wake up: A tiny furry toy mouse to carry in your pocket, because you always wanted that. Things to do your own thing with: A simple camera already loaded with film; a bag of wood scraps to paint and nail and saw; a book about a doll or about a dog, or scary mischievous things because that's what you like to hear about.

And hearing about you. A birthday is a day to take out the old pictures of when you were a baby; to measure your new tallness on the wall; to think: What can you do, what can you reach now, that you couldn't when you were younger?

At bedtime, when you feel small again, it's still your birthday. Your new toys near your bed, your best song, your best story, a mommy and a daddy to stay with you till you fall asleep.



Dear Growing Child

"After only two issues of Growing Child, I have become more confident and comfortable with our first baby. Each issue is like visiting with an experienced mother. And it sure is important to have a good source of information. I used to worry about my child's development and how I could help him, I guess all new mothers do. But your newsletter is the reassurance every new mother needs."

"Thank you for helping make a happy family!"

Linda W.
Hartford, WI



Next Month

- Now We Are Three!
- Development Chart for Three Years
- Three Year Old Thought

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